

JEWES AND BLACKS IN THE EARLY MODERN WORLD

This book offers the first in-depth treatment of Jewish images of and behavior toward Blacks during the period of peak Jewish involvement in Atlantic slaveholding. Based on a wide range of sources in several languages, many previously unexplored and unpublished in English, it addresses some basic scholarly questions: What do primary sources tell us about relations between early modern Blacks and Jews? What do Jewish sources, textual and archival, convey about Blacks? To what degree did Jewish behavior toward slaves take shape under the influence of Jewish law? What does the Jewish legal tradition say about slavery and behavior toward slaves? Is there a connection between Jewish textual attitudes toward Blacks and Jewish behavior toward them? If so, how do the two inform each other? Attempting to move beyond interethnic polemics, the book constructs a cultural and social portrait of Jews – mostly Sephardic – amid a larger socioeconomic context, one from which Jews differed little, their religious Otherness notwithstanding.

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Jews and Blacks in the Early
Modern World

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Contents

<i>List of Illustrations</i>	page vii
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	ix
<i>List of Abbreviations</i>	xiii
Introduction	I
1 Abravanel's Ambivalent Africans	17
2 Jews and Their Slaves: Theory and Reality	50
3 Blacks in Jewish Society East of the Atlantic	70
4 Moshe's Kushite Wife	102
5 Imagining Kushites	116
6 The Curse of Ham: Explorations in Cross-Cultural Genealogy	135
7 Inventing Jewish Whiteness: The Seventeenth-Century Western Sephardic Diaspora, Part I	166
8 Inventing Jewish Whiteness: The Seventeenth-Century Western Sephardic Diaspora, Part II	192
9 The Religious Life of Slaves Belonging to Jews: Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Dutch and English Colonies	217
10 Into the Enlightenment: Jews and Blacks in the Long Eighteenth Century	254
(In)Conclusion	294
<i>Appendix 1</i> Names of Slaves Belonging to Sephardic Jews of Barbados (Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)	305
<i>Appendix 2</i> Names of Slaves Belonging to Sephardic Jews of Jamaica (Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)	307

Appendix 3 Names of Slaves Belonging to Sephardic Jews of Surinam (Eighteenth Century)	308
Appendix 4 Names of Slaves Belonging to Sephardic Jews of Curaçao (Eighteenth Century)	318
Appendix 5 Names of Sephardic Jews in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica (Died before 1800)	331
Appendix 6 Names of Sephardic Jews in Curaçao (Died before 1800)	333
Glossary	337
Notes	339
Works Cited	479
Index	531

Illustrations

Figure 1 A well-off Portuguese Jew accompanied by his Black slave boy, 1682	page 94
Figure 2 Blacks dancing and making music, from Passover Haggada, Venice, 1629	132
Figure 3 Bernard Picart, <i>The Passover of the Portuguese Jews</i> , 1723	170
Figure 4 Illustrated medical license issued to Ya'akov b. Sh'muel of Trieste, 1684	190
Figure 5 Jews receiving the Torah at Mt. Sinai, flanked by their Black slaves, from Passover Haggada, Altona, 1738	257
Figure 6 Jeremias Wachsmuth and Martin Engelbrecht, <i>Jewish Meal at the Festival of Tabernacles</i> , Augsburg, circa 1750	258
Map 1 Authors Who Cite the Curse of Ham (1400–1700)	136

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Abbreviations

<i>AHR</i>	<i>American Historical Review</i>
<i>AJA</i>	American Jewish Archives (Cincinnati, OH)
<i>AJH</i>	<i>American Jewish History</i>
<i>AJHS</i>	American Jewish Historical Society (Waltham, MA)
<i>ANTT</i>	Arquivo Nacional de Torre do Tombo (Lisbon)
<i>b.</i>	<i>ben</i> / son of
<i>B.T.</i>	Babylonian Talmud
<i>CAHJP</i>	Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People (Jerusalem)
<i>EJ</i>	<i>Encyclopedia Judaica</i>
<i>GAA</i>	GemeenteArchief Amsterdam
<i>HAHR</i>	<i>Hispanic American Historical Review</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>J.T.</i>	Jerusalem Talmud
<i>NA</i>	Notarial Archive
<i>NWIG</i>	<i>Nieuwe West-Indische Gids</i>
<i>PAJHS</i>	<i>Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society</i>
<i>R.</i>	Rabbi
<i>SR</i>	<i>Studia Rosenthaliana</i>
<i>TJHSE</i>	<i>Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England</i>
<i>WIG</i>	<i>West-Indische Gids</i>

Introduction

Is it sorcery or conscience that makes me hear the suffering of the oppressed?

Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*

Otherness is not a descriptive category, an artifact of the perception of difference or commonality. . . . It is a political and linguistic project, a matter of rhetoric and judgment.

Jonathan Z. Smith, "What a Difference a Difference Makes"

In men's writings, to name the enemy politically, as fascist, communist, Zionist, etc., or religiously or economically, exonerates the narrator. By naming the other, he situates himself as morally right, above and against those who are wrong.

Miriam Cooke, *War's Other Voices: Women Writers on the Lebanese Civil War*, 98

Know your spirits before entering strange orchards.

Ishmael Reed

One of the more unfortunate results of the rancorous debates about Black-Jewish relations has been to warp scholarly (and not so scholarly) discussion around the topic of Jewish slave trading and the alleged Jewish invention of anti-Black racism, with polemics about who did or did not do what to whom and how badly; in short, the goal often seems to be to name the enemy. Though justified in refuting the specious and outrageously myopic charges of the Nation of Islam's *Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews*, Jewish scholarship continues to use Black "anti-Semitism" as an excuse to ignore the significance of Jewish attitudes toward and treatment of Blacks and to engage in feel-good polemics.¹ However ugly and purposefully hurtful Black nationalist tirades against Jewish slave trading have been, one would be hard-pressed to identify any particular impact on Jewish life other than the reactive spawning of a veritable public relations industry bent on proving and maintaining harmonious relations between Jews

and Blacks.² Indeed, the questions surrounding Jewish slave trading should be easily and quickly resolved at this point, on the basis of the recent work of such scholars as David Brion Davis, Eli Faber, and Seymour Drescher.³ Thankfully, the red-herring issue of Jewish slave trading seems to have receded somewhat from the media horizon since its torrid flashes of the early 1990s. In hindsight, the peak of this polemic, which dates back to the racial conflagrations of the 1960s, might be characterized as a result of the ethnic and racial political realignments of the Reagan-Bush years.

Often ironically ignored has been analysis of Black-Jewish relations as a topic of interest in and of itself and for its fruitfulness as an object of study for Jewish history or intergroup relations, in my case, in the early modern era – which I define as spanning roughly from 1450 to 1800 – the era of growing national identities and the formation of the colonial configuration exemplifying the modern world until quite recently (if not still). Astoundingly, given the amount of discussion on Black-Jewish relations under slavery, little effort seems to have been made to look at primary source material concerning the formative early colonial experience of Jews and Blacks, although that is beginning to change. It is therefore my intention to foreground what has been left to the imagination: the social and discursive histories of this early Black-Jewish experience.

This study begins, then, where existing treatments of Jewish slave trading close. In these pages I attempt to describe one face of the cultural history of Jews and Judaism within the Mediterranean region and the increasingly slave-dependent Atlantic territories conquered during the European overseas expansion. Foregrounding the subject of Jewish-Black relations, I have tried to answer what I take to be basic questions about this period of peak Jewish involvement in Black slavery: What do primary sources tell us about relations between Blacks and Jews? What do Jewish sources, textual and archival, convey about Blacks? If Jews lived according to Jewish law, to what degree did Jewish behavior toward slaves take shape under its influence? What does the *halakha*, the Jewish legal tradition, say about slavery and behavior toward slaves? Is there a connection between Jewish textual attitudes toward Blacks and Jewish behavior toward them? If so, how do the two inform each other?

In order to answer these questions, I have turned to a wide variety of sources, many hitherto ignored. Jewish sources include biblical exegesis, *halakhic* writings, quasi-scientific literature, sermons, poetry, letters, notarial records, and archival sources. Non-Jewish sources include archival sources and travel literature, ethnography, and colonial histories written by Europeans.⁴ I use these materials to construct a cultural and social portrait of Jews amid the larger socioeconomic context, one from which Jews differed little, their religious Otherness notwithstanding.

On one level, it is amazing how little source material can be found describing the relations of Jews and their slaves, itself an indication of the small size of the nexus, of the religious politics in which Jewish slaveholding was always already inscribed in the Christian world, and of the degree to which slaves fell below the horizon of respectable subjects about which one should speak and write. Even scholars steeped in the archival material speak in the language of circumlocution. "We do not have any source about the treatment given by Jewish colonists to their slaves," wrote Chilean historian Günter Böhm (in 1992!).⁵ Earlier scholar Wilfred S. Samuel's language reveals much about the lack of solid evidence on which to base analysis and about the ways this absence of knowledge so often became filled in by wishful thinking: "*It is to be supposed* that the Barbados Jews were kindly masters to their negroes," or, "Whilst positive evidence is lacking, *it seems probable* that the Jews joined with the Quakers in humanely treating their black people, and that they ever heeded the reminder 'for ye were bondsmen in the land of Egypt.'"⁶ Even scholars comfortable enough to draw conclusions usually proffered romantic explanations. Responding to non-Jewish criticism of Surinamese Jewish slave owners, George A. Kohut wrote: "[T]he rigid Mosaic and Rabbinic laws regarding [slaves], were always strictly followed by the Jews and those in Surinam, who had men like the family of Nassy at their head [and] could not have trespassed these ordinances."⁷ This turns out to be self-image-boosting mythmaking, as I will show.

Part of the reason wishful supposition could replace substantive analysis was that scholarship until late into the twentieth century tended to dismiss the importance of slaves and the culture of slavery as much as had discourse in the period under study. Before 1991, only Harold Brackman focused an entire inquiry into the subject of Jewish-Black relations in the early development of colonialism.⁸ Bertram W. Korn produced a brief study of Black-Jewish relations in the antebellum American South.⁹ Both of these studies resulted from the social and intellectual tremors of the 1960s. Generally uninformed by the developing modes of social history, however, most Jewish scholars continued to believe that such topics had little to do with "real" Jewish history. Only with the accusations brought against Jews by Black nationalists did Jewish scholarship deem the topic worthy of investigation, though even here the polemic shaped its contours and results. Next to the growing corpus of American Jewish historical scholarship on the question of ancient rabbinic attitudes toward black people, and a similarly expanding number of studies on late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century Black-Jewish interactions, the entire period in between remained for the most part unexplored until quite recently.¹⁰ Of the three book-length histories of Jewish-Black relations in the United States written by Jewish historians, only that of Bertram Wallace Korn treats pre-Civil War times.¹¹ A mere handful of works, mostly essays, attended to Black-Jewish relations in the

preemancipation Atlantic world.¹² I have elsewhere suggested some reasons for the unwillingness of Jewish scholarship to engage Black-Jewish relations in the colonial period.¹³

One would think that Jewish scholars would have been interested in Jewish relations with Blacks and Black slaves for a less obvious reason than responding to Black allegations. While much of modern Jewish historiography has been attempting to shed the "lachrymose" theory of Jewish history – the idea that between 70 C.E. and 1948 Jews lived utterly disempowered and persecuted – the fact that a few early modern Jewish communities in effect ruled over groups of slaves many times their size has not been explored as a sign of the possession of power by Jews.¹⁴ This oversight indicates the extent to which modern, liberal, antislavery sensibilities have made such an analysis anathema. It also points to an inability to conceive of power except as a political phenomenon dependent on the existence of a state apparatus.

Though steeped in the minutiae of Jewish history and historiography, my model is less that of Jewish studies than cultural studies. Though built on the findings of social and intellectual historiography, the analysis of "culture" means for me the study of the ideational and ideological construction of and response to "reality" by members of and outsiders to specific demographic collectives. I have tried to recast the discussion of early modern Jewish-Black relations in light of recent theoretical and methodological work in various fields of cultural history, anthropology, historical ethnography, and literary studies. While greatly indebted to the social or intellectual histories of "race" and slavery produced by David Brion Davis, C. R. Boxer, Winthrop D. Jordan, Magnus Mörner, A. J. R. Russell Wood, and A. C. de C. M. Saunders, my approach derives more from later scholars, both those who sought to test and tease out the significance of these earlier forays and those whose analysis more generally provided ways of connecting thought and action "on the ground": the work of Stephen J. Greenblatt on colonial figurations; R. Douglas Cope's exploration of the formation and meaning of racial structuration in colonial Mexico; the excavation by Michael Nerlich of the ideology that produced and drove European merchant adventurers; Peter Burke's ethnographic studies of early modern Italian history; and David Nirenburg's evocation of the violence that bonded the different minorities of medieval Spain.¹⁵ From these and many other teachers I have come to favor analyses of culture that proceed with sensitivity to the dialectic of representation – linguistic, visual – as both social mirror and social agent. In this regard, I have purposely constructed an interdisciplinary study. Since, it seems to me, culture consists of a continuum of ideas (discourse) and actions (social events) constantly informing one another, I felt it imperative not to sever this circulation by treating only one aspect. Ideas and actions pose another challenge in that their provenance is neither solely abstract nor purely local,

respectively. Hence, I follow Clifford Geertz's aspiration to present "continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structure in such a way as to bring them into simultaneous view."¹⁶

The geographic coverage of this study is double. On the one hand, it ranges from the Muslim Mediterranean, mostly in the East, through southern and western Europe, and into the American colonies belonging to the Dutch and English. But its primary focus is on the Atlantic world system, a unit of analysis that this study justifies as having particular relevance for the study of discourse about Blacks.¹⁷ This range ensures a comparative comprehension of movement within the history of slavery. On the other hand, the study sticks to a close tracking of the Sephardic diaspora within these territories. Somewhat justifiably, Daniel Swetschinski objected to calling the Jewish Portuguese of seventeenth-century Amsterdam "Sephardim" – and the same applies by extension to their coreligionists in places like Jamaica and Surinam – reserving this appellation for the fifteenth-century exiles from Spain and Portugal and their immediate descendants.¹⁸ For lack of a concise substitute, however, the term *Sephardic* will be used. This second provenance, a narrow focus on Sephardic space and time, establishes a more unifying element, enabling a comparative view of movement within Sephardic discursive and social manifestations from the Iberian Peninsula to the Ottoman eastern Mediterranean and to northern Europe and finally into the American colonies. I ignore the Catholic colonial territories, as the question of the Jewishness of the Conversos or New Christians residing there introduces tremendous and unnecessary complications into what is already a bountiful survey. The vast geographic canvas of my narrative necessitates a certain flattening out of some of the local specificities, but while these particularities are attended to as much as possible, it cannot be forgotten that the transnational nature of the discourse of "race" meant that individual or local actions and beliefs partook of something operating at a higher level.

The general exclusion of Ashkenazic Jews from this study stems partly from pragmatism but mostly from the fact that these Jews played a far less significant role in the kinds of activities that would have brought them into contact with Blacks, although they do appear on the scene in this study by the eighteenth century. Until around the 1720s, if not later, Sephardic Jews made up the majority of the European colonies' Jewish populations. Jamaica's Ashkenazic congregation was not officially organized until 1787. By the next year's writing of the *Historical Essay on the Colony of Surinam*, its Sephardic Surinamese authors estimated that the "German" Jews of Surinam numbered only about "half of the number of their Portuguese brethren."¹⁹ Sephardim, though also mostly poor, provided the occupants of elite roles within the Jewish community and beyond it throughout western Europe and its colonies. In the 1760s, a French writer compared the

Sephardic and Ashkenazic synagogues in the Surinamese capital Paramaribo in a manner that reflected (perhaps unwittingly) the differing economic positions of the two communities: "The Jews, whose number is very considerable, both Portuguese and German, have two synagogues. That of the former is very beautiful; but that of the Germans is not nearly as beautiful."²⁰ Indeed, in a move that would be considered extreme today, Jacob Rader Marcus constructed a fourfold periodization of American Jewish history in a 1958 lecture, labeling the first phase "the Sephardic" and setting it as finishing as late as 1840.²¹

While the majority of the Sephardic population (even in wealthy Amsterdam) continued to be poor, what R. David de Rephael Meldola wrote about Amsterdam Jewry in the mid-eighteenth century applies as well to their seventeenth-century counterparts: "Here in the city of Amsterdam most of the wealthy and the Gentlemen have all of their monies abroad, for from early times they placed all or most of their wealth in another kingdom to bear interest or to trade with overseas, and these funds never saw this country [Holland]."²² Not all Sephardic communities maintained such extensive overseas activities, but Meldola's characterization caught the gist of the entrepreneurial endeavors of their upper and often middle classes. Not for nothing did the Enlightenment philosopher Naphtali Herz Wessely, who had visited Amsterdam in 1755, and had more travel experience than most of his fellow Ashkenazim, look to the Sephardim as late as the 1790s as exemplars of urbane cosmopolitanism: "And moreover you trade in your country with the great imperial powers in Europe, Asia and Africa and are informed of the customs of regions distant from your own."²³ But I am not engaged here in a study of economic history; I take it as a given that many Jews participated economically in colonial endeavors, some gaining great wealth therefrom. In any case, several analyses already treat, more or less satisfactorily, Jewish colonial activities from a purely economic perspective.²⁴

While exploring Europe and the Mediterranean world for purposes of comparison, I try to situate post-fifteenth-century Jewish images of Blacks, the contact of Blacks and Jews, and Black images of Jews amid the new world evoked by John Thornton: "Not only did thousands of Europeans move to the Atlantic islands and the Americas, but literally millions of Africans crossed to the Atlantic and Caribbean islands and the Americas, becoming the dominant population in some areas."²⁵ Blacks were exported from Africa for a simple reason that extended some five centuries. As put so richly in the 1790s by John Gabriel Stedman, the Scottish mercenary sent to Surinam to fight the runaway Black slaves, "The quantum of sugar, &c. will be had, and must be provided by negroes, natives of Africa, who alone are born to endure labour under a vertical sun."²⁶

One does not have to be a Marxist to recognize the enormous gravitational pull commerce exerts on culture. This study explores the ways in which the

commerce in Black slaves and the culture of slaveholding influenced Jewish culture. One of the running arguments of this study takes off from the observations of Charles Verlinden, David Brion Davis, Paul Gilroy, and others about the quintessentially modern, capitalistic, and international character of Atlantic slavery. Other scholars have proposed the essentially modern nature of the Sephardic Jews, many of them former Conversos, descendants of Jews converted, mostly by force, to Catholicism: interiority, psychic compartmentalization, cultural commuting.²⁷ Perhaps more significantly, scholars like Gilroy have persuasively argued that the "history of blacks in the new world, particularly the experiences of the slave trade and the plantation" are "a legitimate part of the moral history of the West as a whole."²⁸ From a somewhat different angle, David Brion Davis, following the work of Charles Verlinden, has written similarly that

Plantation slavery, far from being an aberration invented by lawless buccaneers and lazy New World adventurers, as nineteenth-century liberals often charged, was a creation of the most progressive elements and forces in Europe – Italian merchants; Iberian explorers; Jewish inventors, traders and cartographers; Dutch, German, and British investors and bankers. From the colonization of Madeira and other sugar-producing islands off the coast of West Africa to the westward extension of the "Cotton Kingdom," black slavery was an intrinsic part of "the rise of the West."²⁹

Despite its marginality, then, this phenomenon was not any more anomalous within early modern Jewish history, especially when considering that in the Dutch colonies of Brazil, Surinam, and Curaçao, Jews comprised about a third of the "White" population, a uniquely high profile for the Atlantic world. Combined, these insights afford an excellent case study in the relationship between discourses and social group boundaries and structures. The Sephardim, in their double exile, with their highly differentiated but not always harmonized loyalties, inhabited as at least partial insiders the print and oral discourses about Blacks then circulating through many European cities and colonial towns, and on ships at sea between the two. The behavior of Sephardim in the Atlantic world toward Blacks and toward their slaves so closely resembled that of their host populations and often was so lacking in Jewish particularities that one can forget at times that this slave-owning minority was a severely ostracized and persecuted one. If, as one Sephardi apologist notoriously put it, "the Jew is a chameleon, everywhere taking on the colors of its surroundings," then Jewish slave owning under the colonial regime marks a superb instance of the power of hegemonic discourse at work.³⁰

Throughout this study, I try to avoid fetishizing the difference between slave and free, while attending to the continuum of freedoms and unfreedoms in which all people lived. What Rosemary Brana-Shute said in regard to eighteenth-century Surinam holds no less for relations within the more

domestic slavery in Europe and the Mediterranean; these were "interdependent and cooperative, even if unequal."³¹ The distinction between servants and slaves, though critical, remains extremely murky. Contemporary documents often obscure a neat separation between those who had fully lost their liberty and power and those who exchanged it voluntarily or partially for menial services.³² In seventeenth-century Barbados, for instance, servants constituted "a species of property," and could be pledged, mortgaged, and sold with estates to which they bore indentures, while in nineteenth-century Curaçao, house slaves often received an annual wage.³³ The confusion between servants and slaves is especially difficult with the Hebrew terminology. The Hebrew term *eved* can mean slave or servant and can refer to the lowliest slave as well as a king's servant or even officer. It can serve metaphorically, and is so used frequently in florid rabbinic greetings ("your humble servant, slave to the Torah, seeks your enlightenment with a query . . ."). It is not clear whether *shifsha*/שפחה stands as the female equivalent of "slave" or "servant"; it seems to bear a similar fluidity.

Employer and employed might not always agree on the other's status. In 1778, R. Hayyim Yosef David Azulai tried at an inn in Macon, France, to pay the customary smaller fee for his servant/assistant Abraham, who "raged at me: why had I said he was a servant so that they would abuse him? And he stormed out . . . saying that he would pay himself because he did not want to be thought a servant."³⁴ Abraham's reaction marked more than a pose; the outcome of the conceptual struggle determined his identity to those he might meet. Status may also have been subject to external, legal factors. One Jewish slave owner under the Ottomans refused to contribute to the customary collective bribe given in order to keep slaves, claiming that his maidservant was free.³⁵ A fixation on these categories can obscure their historical fluidity. Examples such as these point to the importance of remaining attuned to the phenomenological conditions of dependent labor in a particular setting, not merely its legal or terminological status.

In sum, certain abstract borders can be erected, even if they were not always realized in actuality or in contemporary discourse. Servants, usually young, for the most part served only temporarily, often until their marriage. They served under contract for specified wages. Slaves belonged wholly to their master and/or mistress, having been purchased outright, and served in perpetuity unless explicitly freed. I try to adhere to a strict use of "servant" for those employed but not owned and "slave" for those bodily owned. For the purposes of this study, I focus mostly on slaves.

It is certainly clear that the slave was a nexus of social, religious, and political relations, as well as a physical body. Belonging as a form of property to his or her master, the slave served as an extension of the master but also as a delimiter of her jurisdiction. Hence, the eternal contestation over the slave's acculturation into the master's household and society. In this regard, it is no

coincidence that the final blow to medieval Mallorcan Jewry came about because of a rumor spread during Holy Week of 1435 that various members of the Jewish community had parodied the sufferings endured by Christ with a (Muslim) slave.³⁶ Whether the Jews had indeed tortured or even crucified the slave against his will in the manner of Christ, whether he had cooperated in the spoof, or whether the entire charge was an invention or elaboration of ardent Catholics, the slave stood between communities as hinge, threshold, bargaining chip, and two-directional symbolic victim.

Delimiting any historical period entails notorious difficulties, and the early modern period poses no exception. I frequently refer to it as the early colonial period because European colonialism seems to me to have been the salient characteristic of the age. As early as 1500, the places to become known as the Caribbean, Mexico, Brazil, and India had been visited by Europeans. The outward motion of European ships, people, ideas, goods, and might burst out around the globe, wresting partnerships and submission from peoples nearly everywhere. European leaders devoted increasing amounts of wealth, energy, and attention toward overseas commercial, military, and religious conquests.

Several appropriate historical events might serve as markers of the colonial period's opening. The 1440s saw the establishment of direct Portuguese slave taking in West Africa, initiating an era in which slavery in the West became increasingly identified with Blacks. In the next decades, a series of papal bulls buttressed this new industry by effectively sanctioning if not encouraging the enslavement of non-European non-Christians for the sake of their Christianization.³⁷ Unlike the slave trade in existence until then, the West African slave trade quickly became a generator both of enormous profits and colonial possibilities for producing further profit through the harnessing of slave labor on a much greater scale and in a much more planned manner. By 1517, Bishop Bartolomé de las Casas obtained permission to import slaves directly from Africa (shipments of slaves had been sent from Lisbon to Hispaniola as early as 1502) in order to spare the quickly extinguishing American natives. A ship laden with slaves left Africa for the Caribbean within a year. By 1518, Carlos V dispensed a contract (*asiento*) to merchant Lorenzo de Gomenot to import no fewer than 4,000 Africans. By 1528 or 1538, the *asiento* had become regularized: a four-year privilege of exclusive rights to import 4,000 slaves to the Spanish colonies in each contract period.³⁸ Aside from brief interruptions caused by war, so functioned the modern trade in the Africans whose coerced labor operated the colonial mines of precious metals and the plantations growing tobacco, sugar, and coffee during the next several hundred years.

The new, mostly Black, slave trade that characterized the early modern world accompanied the formation of a new kind of slavery. This new Atlantic-world slavery drew on precedents in the ancient and medieval world, where

agricultural and industrial production, as well as resource extraction, often depended on the coerced labor of slave forces. Yet under Atlantic slavery, the mass-production aspects of the older agricultural slavery were honed and developed. A colony's entire agricultural production might be given over to a single crop, such as sugar, or to a handful of crops whose growth either promised rich profits or served the commercial needs of the motherland's ruling elites. While old world latifundia were interspersed throughout a Mediterranean nation's territories, the new Atlantic colonies often had the sole purpose of serving as the agricultural production lands for the colonizing power. The production of these crops increasingly became the difficult task of the large forces of slaves bought and maintained by individual plantations. Additionally, these slaves increasingly were stolen from a single human source, sub-Saharan Africa. When I call Atlantic slavery an industrial system, these factors are what I have in mind; from the sixteenth century on, this slavery made up an industry in every modern sense of the word. The Atlantic world slavery that comprises the main focus of this study thus continued but also reworked its old world precedents; its novelty should not be exaggerated or underplayed. What was true sociologically regarding the relationship between old and new world slavery also held for the continued but reworked ideological mechanisms justifying slavery.³⁹

The closing date of the study's period, 1800, is arbitrary and could easily be pushed later. From the perspective of the Atlantic slave system, the termination of the early modern world was particularly unclear. I wanted to avoid the false premise that abolitionism and full legal emancipation changed everything for slaves or their owners, and so I ended my treatment before the full implementation of the latter but while the former had already begun to assert itself. The day-to-day lives of slaves changed hardly at all, despite transformations in Euro-American discourse regarding the propriety or humaneness of slavery. Frank J. Klingberg, for instance, noted about the eighteenth century that "[h]umanitarianism in the course of a century shifted from the acceptance of the view that the Negro could be a Christian and a slave to the more radical position that slavery was contrary to the Christian spirit and therefore that emancipation was necessary."⁴⁰ Jamaica, for example, passed general amelioration laws in 1787, but many of these laws remained barely implemented, while others sought more to make slavery "look better" than to improve slave conditions. Discussing Surinam, sociologist R. A. J. van Lier argued that while "the number of humane slave owners increased in the nineteenth century under the influence of the Enlightenment and liberalism, . . . neither of these two currents brought about any drastic changes in the slave colony."⁴¹

The slave trade and slavery continued unabated throughout the period covered herein, temporary and local fluctuations notwithstanding. In 1776, six of the newly declared United States, among them Delaware, banned the

importation of Africans. Massachusetts enacted a statute banning slave trading sometime prior to 1789. In Jamaica, the trading of slaves continued at full steam until the abolition of the slave trade throughout the English empire in 1807. Imports of slaves into Surinam were prohibited only in 1808, although the Dutch decision to end completely trading in slaves "did not stem from a national debate, but was imposed by Britain."⁴² Legal abolition of the slave trade to Mexico came in 1817. The Bey of Tunis agreed to prohibit the import and export of slaves in 1842, an action taken in turn by the Ottoman regime in 1857. England became the first industrial country to legislate the emancipation of its slaves in 1833. Slavery "was not abolished in Portugal until 1869, though the freed slaves constituted a legal class up to 1878. In Spain the importation of slaves from the colonies was prohibited in 1836. In France, the emancipation of slaves was decreed in 1818, while in Sicily Moslem slaves still existed in 1812."⁴³

Changes in plantation management and technology continued to be minor until well into the nineteenth century. On Surinamese sugar plantations, the introduction of water mills came "only gradually during the eighteenth century," steam mills were "introduced around 1815," and large-scale mechanization "only gained momentum around 1850."⁴⁴ This same decade found Georgia rice plantation owner Charles Manigault quite ambivalent about "his new, labor-saving tidal-powered mechanical thresher, with which his slaves seemingly refused to cooperate."⁴⁵ Despite late-eighteenth-century attempts to increase plantation efficiency, only beginning in the 1830s did plantation slavery in the southern United States fall under the scrutiny and sway of "scientific" reform efforts to manage slaves and plantations systematically, mechanistically.⁴⁶

Administrative changes likewise failed to have much impact, if any, until the second half of the nineteenth century. The Surinamese "plantocracy" continued to rule the colony even after the introduction of a constitution in 1865. The first attempt to eliminate the influence of landowners on the administration of Surinam came in 1828, and claimed only short-lived success.⁴⁷

Indeed, the passage of the early modern into the late modern world might be seen not in the rise of humanism and enlightenment but in an opposite trend born of the same rise of reason, the formation of a scientifically buttressed system of racial hierarchy. Regarding Jews and Blacks, the long eighteenth century proved to be a liminal epoch, during which Sephardic Jews firmly implanted themselves in this new Atlantic world system. Partially, this movement, centripetal or centrifugal depending on one's perspective, manifested itself in the falling away of the Jewish worlds characterized by the centrality of Hebrew-language and halakhic discourse. The contours of this incremental rupture shed light on the trajectory of Jewish assimilation into "the West," as well as on the power and spread of a peculiarly Atlantic discourse of race, not

so much from dominant majorities to subaltern minorities as *among* ethnic and religious groups all playing the game of self-advancement, if not survival.

Still, I am convinced by Michael Bernstein's arguments about the dangers of writing the past from the perspective of its future, of early modern Jewish history in light of the Nazi murder of European Jewry or of Black history from the perspective of late-nineteenth- and twentieth-century scientific racism.⁴⁸ I have tried, almost excruciatingly, to avoid writing the period of my study as if it led inevitably to these two tragedies. The arguments of Bruno Latour against seeing the "modern" age as somehow inherently different and more advanced led me to similar conclusions and efforts.⁴⁹ The common linear and progressive narrative posits the rise of Enlightenment humanism, writing from a perspective of achievement. But such political edens, in thought or practice, seem all too delicate, rare, and brief. Analyzing violence, power, and exclusion means following traces beyond labels such as "liberal," "medieval," or "religious."

In many ways, I read a remarkable stasis in Jewish and general discourse about Blacks. Yet I am not seeking to produce a structuralist or determinist perspective; social relations and discursive images have specific local causes and variations of incalculable complexity, which cannot be predicted in advance based on universal laws. The internal domain of any religious culture is heterogeneous. To call both Alonso de Sandoval and Voltaire elements of "Christian discourse," as I do, may strain the bounds of terminological usefulness, although I endeavor to specify the particular segments of this discourse as I discuss them. The absence of extensive comparative analysis results only from the fact that while attendant to external transformations and their significance, readers will quickly note from my vocabulary and approach that this study is written from within the discipline of Jewish history. It is usual to segregate Jewish and Black histories from "general" European history. This study of Jews in the Mediterranean and Atlantic worlds will, it is hoped, contribute to the "normalization" of their history into these geopolitical histories. Despite their Otherness, Jews were active participants in the formation of the cultures in which they lived and suffered, especially in the Atlantic world. I hope, however, that this investigation will also make some contributions toward the historiography of Blacks in their own diaspora and of the Atlantic slave system, especially as much of the material herein has never before been published in English, or at all. In particular, the thorough tracing I attempt of the textual and social vicissitudes of the early modern formation of the Atlantic racial system through the lens of its Sephardic subculture better reveals some of the dialectics — between continental metropolises and their colonies, between "pure" theory and quotidian social administration — that informed this development.

One reader called this study "baroque," a term I will wield as a laurel and program for several reasons. The "baroque" style of presentation reflects on

the one hand the quintessentially Baroque origin of modern racial thought, a theme picked up by Robin Blackburn and in perfect fitting with the general thesis of José Antonio Maravall.⁵⁰ The cornucopia of microhistories and the plethora of textual examples to follow also reflect a certain preemptive exhaustiveness summoned by the contentious nature of the topic of Black-Jewish relations.⁵¹ Presenting the contentious quality of the original material as such serves as a way of coping with — I do not say harmonizing — the necessity of grasping its conflicting and conflicted interpretation. The riot of particularity on paper does greater justice, to my mind, to the irreducibility of historical events. Throughout, I endeavor to leave unresolved the tensions and gaps of the multiple statements and acts that constitute the object of my attention. In each, one sees the local negotiations of general and diffuse cultural themes, constructing an endless set of attempts to work out the meaning of Whiteness, Blackness, Jewishness, servitude, and freedom.

This study for the most part follows a chronological framework. Within each rough period, particular themes are treated in separate chapters or chapter subsections. The analysis of Chapter 1 centers on the figure and writings of the fifteenth-century writer Isaac or Yitshak Abravanel. Through his passages regarding Blacks, I glance at medieval discourse in order to assess the lack of significant change in early modern Jewish discourse. Here I balance Abravanel's generic images of Black figures, mostly plagiarized from earlier sources, with possible influences from fifteenth-century developments in the trading of Black slaves, concluding that in Abravanel's case, factors such as class may have played a significant role in the construction of his statements.

Chapter 2 provides a brief survey of Jewish slave owning from the perspective of law, both non-Jewish and Jewish, and from the perspective of social reality. The Jewish ownership of slaves was continually contested, yet early modern colonial pragmatics dictated that this theological reluctance remain ignored in practice.

In Chapter 3, I turn to a cultural analysis of social interactions between Jews and Blacks in the Mediterranean and in Europe. Several fragments of textual and archival materials, treating Jewish masters and their Black maidservants, serve as a springboard for assessing certain facets of "old world" Jewish slaveholding and the apparently undifferentiated place of Blacks within it.

In Chapter 4, I trace the topos of the Kushite wife of Moshe in Jewish discourse before the eighteenth century. This figure provided an opportunity for various rabbis to elaborate images of Blacks that were strongly gendered and heavily eroticized.

The fifth chapter continues the discussion of textual images from before the eighteenth century, now of Blacks or Kushites more generally. The mostly

negative, hardly innovative statements to be found in Jewish discourse do not significantly differ from those appearing in the larger discourse about Blacks. These passages can only with difficulty, if at all, be linked to the actual social presence of Blacks.

Chapter 6 explores some early modern instances in the cross-cultural genealogy of the curse of Ham, showing its general insignificance in early modern Jewish discourse and its relative stasis as a trope, both signs that the notion of this curse played little role in the Jewish culture of this period and that what presence it did have reflected an internal and abstract rabbinic conversation, rather than contemporary social realities.

In Chapter 7, I look at a cluster of moments in the invention of Jewish Whiteness in the seventeenth-century western Sephardic diaspora, especially in Amsterdam. Here, for the first time, one can trace a specific cultural impact due to the presence of Blacks within Jewish society. The chapter's first section covers the decline of the circumcision of slaves in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a decline reflecting an increasing discomfort with the religious absorption of slaves, now mostly Black, on the part of western Sephardic Jews, themselves uneasy about their own status vis-à-vis Whiteness. The theme of the chapter's second section comprises Jewish and non-Jewish views of Jewish darkness.

Chapter 8 begins in earnest coverage of social interactions in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, perhaps the height of Jewish participation in the Atlantic world system, in an effort to test the significance of the relations between discourse and practice. This chapter continues the coverage of the previous chapter, laying out the communal legislation constructing and reflecting the Jewish response, as it were, to racial anxieties in Sephardic Amsterdam. The chapter's second section investigates a fascinating instantiation of Sephardic Whiteness, a result of a late-seventeenth-century visit of some Amsterdam Sephardim to their newfound cousins in Cochin, India.

In Chapter 9, I begin a series of thematic studies of strictly "new world" themes in Jewish slaveholding and Black-Jewish relationships in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. I analyze several practices or sites of master-slave interaction – the circumcision/conversion, the naming, and the manumission of slaves belonging to Jews – in an attempt to determine more about the alleged Jewish identities of the slaves belonging to Jewish masters. The variety of evidence reveals only a minimal exposure to Jewish concepts and practices among slaves and the general nonintegration of slaves into the religion of their masters.

In Chapter 10, I resume the exploration of Jewish discourse about Blacks, bringing it "into the Enlightenment" following on my discussion about the social realities of Jewish slaveholding. I show the minimal impact that the culture of Atlantic slavery had on Jewish discourse regarding Blacks east of the Atlantic, which remained for the most part steeped in traditional tropes.

In colonial Jewish discourse, one finds again a high degree of similitude between Jewish and non-Jewish images of Blacks, both of which presented overwhelmingly negative depictions.

Though of book length, this study is very much an essay, in the old sense of the word, meaning an attempt. Not only because it delves into frequently uncharted areas, I have doubtlessly made the consequent number of mistakes, which readers are invited to report to me.

A few final notes on terminology and stylistics. Where I do mention members of the population known variously as New Christians, Conversos, Marranos or crypto-Jews, I follow the definition of Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, who argued that those individuals and families maintaining Jewish allegiance or practice "were a part of the New Christian group, but were not coextensive with it."⁵² Therefore, I use "crypto-Jew" or "Marrano" to indicate an individual with actively and consciously "Jewish" or "crypto-Jewish" loyalties or practices. By use of "Converso" or "New Christian," I refer to an individual only in a neutral sociological sense as a descendant of forcibly or willingly converted Jews, without implying anything about his or her personal ideology or allegiances.

I capitalize Black and White as nominal terms for kinds of human beings. This is to emphasize their conceptual, socially constructed character; obviously, there is no such thing as black or white skin. I prefer the artificiality of capital letters to the constant use of scare quotation marks. I have chosen to leave "mulatto" and cognate terms uncapitalized, though they were no less a social construct, in deference to the thorny question of mulatto identity until the eighteenth century and its dissipation by the twentieth century. Although I at times identify Blacks and mulattos separately, for convenience I mostly collapse all "people of color" into the category of Blacks.

All translations are my own unless otherwise noted. Biblical quotations in English are generally based on *The JPS Torah Commentary* (1989), but have been reworked where necessary.

When I capitalize the term "Rabbinic" it is with the intention of denoting the rabbis of the period of the composition of the classical post-biblical Jewish texts and their work: the Mishnah, the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, and the collections of midrashim, dating very roughly from the first century to the ninth. When not capitalized, "rabbinic" refers sociologically to personalities and intellectual elements stemming from and belonging to the class of rabbis within the Jewish world throughout later history.

For Hebrew names and figures from the Hebrew Bible I have chosen to transliterate the original form. Thus, Moshe is Moses, Ya'akov is Jacob, and so on. I do this not out of fawning literalism or religious fundamentalism but in

order to produce an effect of *Verfremdung* (estrangement) that will hopefully inoculate readers against lazy assumptions about "Judeo-Christian" homogeneity. Although I argue that many of the discursive senses about Blacks were shared by the three major monotheisms, it must be remembered that biblical characters were deployed within the specific frameworks of each religious cultural system. It is not clear to me that Ham and Ham, for example, intend the same figure or produce the same set of connotations. For terms already familiar in English, such as the names of places and biblical books, I have used the anglicized term, that is, Leviticus, Canaanite, and so on, in order to avoid unnecessary confusion.

Similarly, I have not modernized the spelling of terms referring to seventeenth-century Portuguese Jewish groups, institutions, or concepts. In the original sources, written either before the standardization of Spanish orthography or by individuals and communities who had not internalized the standardization, the spelling varies from usage to usage, sometimes even within the same document. Here, too, I cite the terminology as written in the local original context, using modern standardized spelling only when referring abstractly in my own text to these terms.

I

Abravanel's Ambivalent Africans

Regardless of whether European Christian discourse inherited certain statements about Ham or Blacks, accurately or not, from Jewish discourse at the onset of the early modern period, Jewish discourse also continued to cite, defend, and dispute these statements. Alongside, in dialogue with, independently from Christian discourse, early modern Jewish discourse continued finding Blacks "good for thinking." I am more interested in the use-value of statements and concepts pertaining to Blacks than in their origin, especially as writers about Africa and its inhabitants fed particularly on "[r]epetition, quotation, and plagiarism."¹ Sara Mills expressed the goals of this kind of analysis: "not to uncover the truth or origin of a statement but rather to discover the support mechanisms which keep it in place."² In order to construct a portrait of Jewish discursive models of depicting Blacks and Blackness coming out of the Middle Ages, then, I have chosen to center the analysis of this chapter around Yitshak Abravanel (1437–1508).

A close look at the writings of the Lisbon-born Abravanel presents an excellent case study with which to begin. His voluminous writings and several comments about Kush, Kushites, slaves, and Ham offer an opportunity to do more than pick out isolated quotations. In addition, because of his prominence, a great deal is known about him, affording a better chance of examining the "personality" and social context behind/within the passages and the relation between the texts and their production. His position as a thoroughly educated man in both Jewish and non-Jewish fields of knowledge means that Abravanel's texts offer an occasion to think about how discourse flowed between domains made up of differing religious cultures. His location in Portugal and then Spain, whence he fled with the expulsion in 1492, enables us to gauge Jewish and non-Jewish discourse at the outset of the Iberian/Atlantic slave trade – roughly its first half century – against earlier and later discourse (the latter in Chapters 4 through 6).³ Finally, the person, texts, and historical setting of Abravanel pose

an opportunity to introduce some of the challenges of interpreting historical Jewish (and non-Jewish) literature for an understanding of cultural attitudes and behavior. In this chapter, I read Abravanel's conflicted statements about Blacks as a reflection of the attitudes of a certain class toward the historical juncture of the beginnings of the systematic enslavement of Black Africans by the Iberian powers, composed through the lens of previous Jewish notions regarding Kushites.

THE DIVISION OF HUMANKIND

Abravanel's main, extended comments about Ham and Africans come in two places in the course of his commentary to Genesis. On the biblical text from verse 9:17 through 11:1, that is, the story of the drunkenness of Noah and its consequences plus the genealogies of Noah's three sons, Abravanel turned to commenting on verse 9:19 ("These are the three sons of Noah and from them was the whole earth overspread"). Abravanel's first substantive statements about the three sons linked them to the known continents east of the Atlantic Ocean:

and they divided up the whole world between them. And you already knew that the ancient sages divided the world into three parts. The first is Asia, its beginning in the land of Israel and thenceforth toward the east, and this part Shem took and it was named after him Asia. And the second part was called Africa and it fell to Ham's portion. And the third part is Europe and it fell in the portion of Yefet.⁴

This self-effacing move in the name of unnamed ancient scholars introduced a notion of growing universal scholarly acceptance, an introduction marked by the mapping of the Hebrew names of Noah's sons onto the "foreign" continental toponyms transliterated into Hebrew (אֲשִׁיָּא, אֲפִרִיקָא, אֲיֹרֹפָא).⁵ Abravanel's clear-cut division of peoples and continents buttressed a neat division of types of humans with symbolic and scientific intent. The early modern period witnessed the coalescence of the concept of continents. Hitherto unknown in their full scope, the many European voyages overseas helped concretize scientific knowledge of the world's landmasses. Abravanel's texts, like those of many of his contemporaries, stood at the cusp of the "medieval" and "modern," "religious" and "scientific." Abravanel reported on how the shape of Africa emerged from the haze of myth as a result:

today many ships go forth from the kingdom of Portugal, which is at the farthest West, to the land of Kush and pass below the equator and they found there human settlement and a land of milk and honey as is explained among them [the Portuguese].⁶

Since geography still operated mostly within the discourse of theology, one could now speak of "Europeans" and "Asians" and "Africans" with more confidence as reflecting some parallel continental division of humanity.

Valerie Flint claimed that the notion that Ham received Africa to rule is "traceable to the Christian Fathers."⁷ It first appeared in the writings of Pope Gregory the Great (ca. 540–604), who apportioned the world's three landmasses to Noah's three sons.⁸ Although little consistency marked the tradition of assigning the world's parts to biblical and/or classical figures, by Abravanel's time scholarship and discourse had increasingly populated the three continents east of the Atlantic with the three sons of Noah.⁹ The *Grande é General Estoria*, produced under Castile's Alfonso X (1221–1284), probably between 1280 and 1284, collected all of the historical knowledge then available to its redactors, who identified the three continents and related how each son wanted a continent for himself and his companions. The redactors assigned Asia to Sem (bk. II, ch. 39) and told how Cam "passed to Africa" (bk. III, ch. 7) and cited Isidore to the effect that Japhet – and Noah – sailed to Europe and commenced settling it.¹⁰ A world map featured in Hartmann Schedel's *Liber chronicarum* (Nuremberg, 1493), known as the *Nuremberg Chronicle*, assigned Sem's posterity to Asia, Japhet's to Europe, and Cham's to Africa. As sources, Schedel cited Seneca, John Crisostom, Isidor, and Pliny.¹¹ Another set of texts to divide up these three continents in this manner were the medieval Latin versions of Josephus, which circulated from at least the ninth century.¹² Quite probably Abravanel had read some of these texts.¹³

Abravanel's global partition partook of this moment of humanist harmonization of biblical texts, classical geography, historiographical tradition, and contemporary observations. The influence of the knowledge of continents on the division of humankind should not be exaggerated, however. Vehement, essentialized denigrations of Ham and Blacks emerged long before such knowledge coalesced into concrete form, while many of the characterizations of Blacks to emerge afterward contained little that was new.

DEGRADING OTHERS: NOAH'S CURSE AND THE TRADITION OF NATURAL SERVITUDE

After briefly discussing Noah's planting of the vine and subsequent drunkenness, Abravanel addressed the issue of whether Noah's curse was directed at Kena'an rather than Ham. Using some of the answers offered by prior rabbinic authorities, Abravanel decided that the young Kena'an and his father Ham each committed different aspects of the crime against Noah, the youth having discovered the naked Noah, the two of them gazing upon him, Ham not thinking to respectfully cover his father, and Kena'an going out to laughingly

tell his brothers Kush, Phut, and Mitsrayim. According to Abravanel, the majority of the sin's onus rested on Kena'an rather than Ham, such that Noah's curse followed suit. Kena'an's punishment consisted of a double curse: eternal servitude and submission to his brothers, the other sons of Ham, and also to his uncles Shem and Yefet. Regarding the first curse, it augured the historical circumstances of Canaanite submission at various times to Egypt and Israel and then to the conquerors of Israel, the Romans and the Kedarites (Arab tribes), both descendants of Yefet. In the distant future, God would redeem Israel and bring them back to rule over this land, so as to again fulfill this curse/prophecy. The three iterations of Kena'an's servitude in this biblical passage (Gen. 9:25, 26, and 27) thus entailed no redundancy in Abravanel's opinion, but rather an emphatic expression of the eternal and inexorable nature of Canaanite servitude.

While Kena'an may have received the explicit curse, Ham received what can only be termed an implicit one. In any case, the relationship of the fates and characters of Kena'an and of Ham are not so easily disentangled. Elsewhere, Abravanel asserted that perpetual servitude obtained for Kushites as well. In his commentary to Deuteronomy, as well as in his commentary to Amos 9:7 (a verse he cited also in the former remarks), he analogized Kushites and Israelites. It is clear, he wrote,

that this nation [the Jews] are before Him, may He be blessed, like perpetual slaves, with their earlobes drilled [as they rejected the possibility of freedom; see Exod 21:6, Deut. 15:17], and that their children and their children's children are like Kena'anite slaves and like Kushites who will not be free in any respect, and as it is written, "Are you not like the Kushites to me, house [sic] of Israel (Amos 9:7)?"¹⁴

Here, Abravanel assumed Kushite servitude to be perpetual, in parallel with the perpetual servitude of Canaanite slaves. This passage conveys more than a merely historical observation on Abravanel's part, especially since at the time of its writing, Black servitude among the Portuguese and Spanish was hardly a permanent condition, manumissions being frequent and routine.¹⁵ Compare Abravanel's words with those of R. David Kimhi (1160?-1235?; Narbonne) when commenting on the same verse in Amos. For Kimhi, Black servitude was a simple fact of contemporary reality: "like the Kushites, who are slaves, and these are the blacks descending from Kush son of Ham, who are sold to be slaves."¹⁶ Kimhi felt it necessary to include the explanatory biblical genealogy of the Kushites, indicating that for both authors, the cause of these parallel perpetual servitudes would seem to reside in the curse of Genesis 9. Abravanel went further, however, reiterating the prophetic structure of the biblical speech act ("will not be free in any respect"). Abravanel here alluded not to individual

status, however, but to a collective attribute making Kushites permanent slaves.

When he came to the next chapter, Genesis 10, Abravanel provided a thoroughly Aristotelian analysis of the distinctions between Noah's three sons and their descendants. Explained Abravanel:

And thus Ham was the sign for the animal life and therefore he saw his father's nakedness and did not show mercy for his honor, as a fool he did not know the degrees of respecting one's father and mother and uncovering nakedness. And Yefet was the sign for the pleasant life according to virtue and ethics and honor and therefore he awakened to cover his father's nakedness. . . . But Shem was the sign for the rational life, for his work was the examination of wisdom and its investigation.¹⁷

Abravanel's hierarchy of the qualities of Noah's three sons was taken from Aristotle's three ways of life (bestial, political, theoretical) as expressed in the *Nicomachean Ethics* (1095b).¹⁸ Aristotle's *Politics* (VII.7) had explicitly linked the issues of "character" and political condition, an issue which "can be understood by any one who casts his eye on the more celebrated states of Hellas, and generally on the distribution of races in the habitable world":

Those who live in a cold climate and in [northern] Europe are full of spirit, but wanting in intelligence and skill; and therefore they keep their freedom, but have no political organization, and are incapable of ruling over others. Whereas the natives of Asia are intelligent and inventive, but they are wanting in spirit, and therefore they are always in a state of subjection and slavery. But the Hellenic race, which is situated between them, is likewise intermediate in character, being high-spirited and also intelligent. Hence it continues to be free, and is the best governed of any nation, and, if it could be formed into one state, would be able to rule the world.¹⁹

The direct relationship between climate and temperament was not in every case cast as one of pure negativity by those who held to the environment theory, but it did differentiate between those of the "extremes" and the more equanimous "center." These climatic-astrological theories can be found in Pliny, Posidonius, Vitruvius, Ovid, and Vegetius, among Roman thinkers, and derive from the geographical determinism of Hippocrates.²⁰ Thus, according to Pliny (*Naturalis Historia* 2.80.189),

heat is responsible for the scorched complexion, curly beards and hair, and tall stature of the Ethiopians, and mobility of the climate explains their wisdom; moisture in the opposite region of the world accounts for the tall men of the north with their white frosty skin and straight, yellow hair, their fierceness resulting from the rigidity of the climate; a mix of fire and moisture in the middle region of the earth explains

men of medium stature, with a blended complexion and with gentle customs and fertile intellects.²¹

By the Middle Ages, many views of Blacks produced by the cultures of the "temperate" zones held them in far lower regard.

Abravanel's reiteration of Aristotle's theories assumed as well their climatic basis, hence the distinction of Noah's sons by continent.²² It also maintained their deterministic quality. Leadership and servitude derived from natural, in-born traits, even if these were introduced by historical circumstance, such as a curse from a prophet (Noah) or God:

And about Ham it said: "And Kena'an will be a slave to him," meaning to say that Kena'an his son, most beloved to him [of all his sons], will serve Shem and Yefet. For just as the philosopher [Aristotle] mentioned in his book on the leadership of the state, for sages the desire for authority and mastery is natural while for those who work the ground the desire [is] for servitude and being ruled over, which according to this is called Kena'an, from the language of "submission," as I explained, for the animal life serves the aesthetic life and yields to the intellectual life.²³

In the euphemistic language of Leo Strauss, Abravanel "seems occasionally to adopt the Aristotelian doctrine of natural masters and servants."²⁴ Such views appear elsewhere in Abravanel's works, for instance, as justification for Israelite (just) wars of conquest.²⁵ Were it not for the concrete ethnographic context in which it is embedded, such a characterization of Kena'an/Ham might have suggested merely an abstracted symbolism. Ham's behavior – before any curse – reflected his nature. Again, one sees the difficulty of untangling the characters and fates of Ham and Kena'an; Abravanel cited the curse of the latter as an attribute of the former. The subject of Abravanel's commentary wavered between the historical servitude of the Canaanites and the natural incivility of Ham.

MACROCOSM: FAULTS FROM THE STARS?

Anthony Pagden wrote that although Aristotle's theory of natural slavery "found some support in the ancient world, it was never discussed at any length by a Christian author until its revival by Aquinas in the thirteenth century."²⁶ Still, long before Abravanel, this doctrine had become commingled with that of geographical and astrological variation, on the one hand, and notions of sinfulness and merit, on the other. Islamic scholarship, heir to many classical traditions, resorted to such a cluster of theories in treating the differences between peoples, the place of sub-Saharan Blacks, and the significance of Ham and his genealogy.²⁷ Ibn Khaldūn (fourteenth century; North Africa, Spain) rejected

the idea that Blacks (Abyssinians, Zanj, Sudanese) were cursed to Blackness through Ham, but allowed that "the curse included no more than that Ham's descendants should be the slaves of his brothers' descendants."²⁸ The Blackness of Ham's descendants derived from the excessive sun and heat of the first and second zones, a theory for which he cited a mnemonic medical poem of Avicenna.²⁹ Ibn Khaldūn's thoroughly climatic perspective accumulated reasons to categorize Blacks as natural slaves:

It has even been reported that most of the Negroes of the first zone dwell in caves and thickets, eat herbs, live in savage isolation and do not congregate, and eat each other. The same applies to the Slavs. The reason for this is that their remoteness from being temperate produces in them a disposition and character similar to those of the dumb animals, and they become correspondingly remote from humanity. The same also applies to their religious conditions. They are ignorant of prophecy and do not have a religious law, except for the small minority that lives near the temperate regions [the Christian Abyssinians, the Islamicized Mālī, Gawgaw and Takrūr in the south, and the Slavic and Turkish nations that adopted Christianity in the north].³⁰

The "sin" of Blacks, then, is their primitivity. According to Ibn Khaldūn, the attributes of Blacks did not stem from any inherent defect, as had been thought by some, but by the climate:

We have seen that Negroes are in general characterized by levity, excitability, and great emotionalism. They are found eager to dance whenever they hear a melody. They are everywhere described as stupid. The real reason for these (opinions) is that, as has been shown by philosophers in the proper place, joy and gladness are due to expansion and diffusion of the animal spirit.³¹

This expansion and diffusion resulted from the heat and dryness of equatorial Africa. Yet it cannot be coincidental that the Blacks who happened to live in the temperate zones received a cultural infusion from one of the great monotheisms. Aquinas himself provided an excellent example of the simultaneous reign of these various climatological and theological discourses already at the "entry" of Aristotle into Christian culture in his *Summa Theologiae* (I. Iae. q. 96, art. 3):

The cause of inequality, which today exists between people, seems to proceed in the first place from God, because he rewards some according to their merits and punishes others; and also due to nature, through whose defect some are born weak and imperfect and others robust and perfect: the like of which would not have had a place in the primitive state. . . . Thus it is not inconvenient to assure that following the diversified disposition of the air and situation of the heavenly bodies, some would have been born more robust, of larger size, more beautiful and better complexioned than others.

Although Aquinas denied, at least in one place, that servitude came as a punishment for sin, others, following Augustine, disagreed.³² The inclusive explanation of Aquinas for human variety – divine will, accidents of nature such as climate and air, or the position of the constellations – was here applied to individuals, but it was applied as easily and frequently to the disequilibrium between whole peoples. A Portuguese manuscript of a physiognomic text by Pseudo-Aristotle from the beginning of the fifteenth century lingered over the skin color, kinky hair, and thick lips of Blacks as signs of collective debasement.³³ At least one Jewish author, R. Menahem b. Aharon ibn Zera (d. Toledo 1385), incorporated these classical notions, writing:

It is well known that the appearance of the people of Germany is different from that of the people of Spain and that of the Ethiopian is different again by reason of the climate, the varying strength of the sun which affects the air, and consequently the plants and the fruits vary. Those partaking of them change accordingly. Hence the difference in language and appearance. This is known to every wise man. The opinions [of the peoples] differ according to the difference in their appearance.³⁴

Abravanel fully agreed with the notion of a distinct fate for distinct peoples; he stated in several texts that every nation and every city possessed a particular star that influenced or controlled its destiny.³⁵

Such theories of human differentiation coexisted with theological expressions of humanity's oneness and with the secondary and accidental nature of external differences. The ambivalence about human difference was thorough and determined by situational needs: When human equality before God needed emphasis, that is, on a vertical plane in which humans comprised but one level (and not the superior one), difference became accidental; when human variety on a horizontal plane needed to reflect the divinely ordered difference of the vertical plane, difference and the binarism of superiority/inferiority became essential.³⁶ As will be seen, Abravanel wielded, when needed, both an indivisible humanity and distinguishable types of humans.

MICROCOSM: THE COMPLEXION OF BLACKNESS

Related to the climatic theories used by Abravanel were theories of temperament or complexion, often revolving around the various humors or fluids of the human body. Like climatic theories, these might be invoked to explain personal or collective character. Abravanel frequently deployed humoral discourse. He explained that some dreams derived not from divine sources but from the humoral state of the dreamer.³⁷ Humoral theory had a long tradition within Jewish thought, and parallels to Abravanel's statements can

be found in many earlier writers.³⁸ In one description of Esav, Abravanel wrote:

For here Esav, being ruddy and hairy, his temperament related, as I mentioned, to the increase of blood and the reddening of [his] melancholia, for he was "a man who knew hunting" [Gen. 25:27]. For by nature those who are ruddy are sharp thinkers and schemers and thus he was knowledgeable about hunting by means of cunning and deceit. And because he was melancholic he was a man of the field, a hater of the company of people and separate from their group, as is the fate of melancholic/black people [האנשים השחורים] of the mountains.³⁹

As can be seen in this passage, humoral theory related in a confused way with complexion and climatic theories insofar as social and political temperament were concerned. Only shortly into the Roman world, one finds the humors collated with complexion and physical appearance. From the twelfth century onward, the term "complexion," which comes from the Latin *complexio*, referred to a person's (or people's) "temperament," the "balance of the qualities of hot, wet, cold, and dry."⁴⁰ Melancholia, a type of personality, clearly could be read on a social and political level as well, as Abravanel did here, though Abravanel's melancholics here should not be confused with Blacks. Here, we see how much overlap this theory had with medieval (and earlier) images of the wild man, with the valence assigned to the forest primitive who rejected or did not know the *civitas*, the urban sphere of order, contracts, distinctions (i.e., culture).

Humoral theory also related to the way Blacks and Blackness were imagined.⁴¹ Thus, Galen's discussion of the difference in complexion between the Scythians and the Ethiopians was taken up by Ptolemy (second century C.E.) as support for the effects of the climates of different latitudes on their inhabitants.⁴² The melancholic personality type was called black, melancholia "the blackness." Indeed, many of the facets of the anti-Black motifs to be found in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic discourse can probably be traced to these early medical theories, though they varied widely, if not wildly, and both discourses shifted dramatically after the sixteenth century. In his *Problemata*, Aristotle described the results of the overheating of black bile: "produces cheerfulness accompanied by song and frenzy, and the breaking forth of sores, and the like."⁴³ Rufus of Ephesus, a leading Greek physician during the reign of Trajan (98–117 C.E.), whose views influenced Galen, Ishaq ibn Imran (ninth century), Constantinus Africanus (1020?–1087), and other medical experts, claimed to observe in melancholia sufferers "blinking and protruding eyes, thickened lips, darkening of the complexion, development of hairiness, and speech difficulties."⁴⁴ According to Aretaeus of Cappadocia (second century), melancholia often "leads to insensibility and fatuousness," so that the victims

"become ignorant of all things, or forgetful of themselves, and live the life of inferior animals."⁴⁵ Alexander of Tralles (525–605) felt that certain kinds of melancholia, those caused by an excess of blood, attacked "hairy men, of dark skin and frail constitution" more easily "than those who were robust and of a white body."⁴⁶

Abravanel's mingling of this and other theories, as well as the specific content he presented, also had direct precedent in Jewish discourse. In the course of explicating Song of Songs 1:6, Yosef b. Yehudah b. Ya'akov ibn Akhnin (writings ca. 1165–1195; born Barcelona, fled to North Africa) related that the melancholy that strikes the spirit is called "blackness, that is, blackness of heart and blackness of vision."⁴⁷ The linkage of melancholia and blackness existed on descriptive as well as diagnostic levels. Blacks, who often represented the fearsome in medieval discourse from all three of the major monotheisms, would appear as tormentors in the dreams of melancholics. In one such description of a traumatic dream, Shem Tov b. Yosef Falaquera (ca. 1225–1295; northern Spain) utilized as tormentors two ugly Kushites who sought to stab the dreamer with their spears as he trudged through a desert wasteland.⁴⁸

Rabbi Shmuel Zarza (fourteenth century; Valencia) penned a particularly rich statement linking Kushites, humoral blackness, and issues of civility/barbarity. In commenting on Genesis 10:8 ("And Kush begot Nimrod"), he cited an interpretation of his contemporary R. Shlomo al-Konstantini:

It is a known thing that the cause of jealousy is the increase of black bile [i.e., melancholy], which brings a person to vice. And Kush is black and thus melancholy/the black gives birth to rebelliousness and to the evildoer, because "Wickedness proceeds from the wicked [I Sam. 24:13]." And therefore Kush begot Nimrod who is rebelliousness. And they also said that Nimrod led the whole world to rebel.⁴⁹ And this is the Kushite moisture (הליחה הכושית) which, when it increases in the body, generates bad thoughts, will deny the righteous thoughts with the increase of the false thoughts such as the denial of His existence, may He be blessed.⁵⁰

Zarza/al-Konstantini's punning chain of association – blackness and melancholia, bile and rebellion – put together humoral theory, a framework of biblical genealogy and exegesis, and geo-climatic assumptions about the religious ignorance and political disorder of Blacks.⁵¹ The resulting nexus, the black moisture which causes bad thoughts, became explicitly labeled "Kushite" – "Kushite moisture" – a term usually reserved for a set of people. Again, the influence of Islamic thought can be readily seen. Valencia remained under Muslim control until 1252, while al-Konstantini's background in this formerly Muslim province explains his knowledge of Islamic discourse. Zarza called al-Konstantini's interpretation "along the internal method/על דרך הפנימי," indicating that its source probably lay in the Islamic "internalist" philosophers, the *ahl al-bāṭin*, who

avored figurative, allegorical interpretations of the Koran that were yet highly embodied and concrete.⁵²

One pertinent example of such interpretation (and possible source for Zarza/al-Konstantini?) can be found in the voluminous writings of Muḥjī al-dīn ibn al-'Arabī (1165–1240; Murcia). He interpreted Sura 105 of the Koran, "The Elephant" – in which Abraha, (Christian) king of Ethiopia, sought to destroy Mecca and prevent pilgrimages with an army of elephants but was confounded by God – as describing how the "dark Abyssinian soul" or the demonic force seeks to destroy the holiness of the heart (that is, the house of God), dissipate the pilgrims (the spiritual powers), and lead them to the temple of material nature.⁵³ Still, it should be assumed that the specific content of Zarza/al-Konstantini's passage reflects an interpretation of its immediate Jewish author(s); neither Nimrod nor Kush, for example, appears in the Koran and only seem to enter Arabic discourse in the medieval period, from Jewish sources. The same nexus of Blackness and lust for the material can be found in Ibn Akhnin's late-twelfth-century commentary on the black hair of the lover in Song of Songs 5:10: "And perhaps it is possible that the blackness of the hair is the darkness of the souls and the gloominess of their chasing after their desires, who drown in the sea of the primordial matter."⁵⁴ According to the Spanish Bishop Alfonso de Madrigal (ca. 1410–1455), known as El Tostado, a major source for Abravanel, melancholics required the taking in of more delight than other people, due to their impetuous and changeable nature.⁵⁵ The humoral complexion of Blackness on which Abravanel drew had long been a major feature of the textual characterization of Ḥam.

BLACKENING ḤAM

Abravanel's words in his comments to Genesis 10 conform perfectly to many of the earlier views of Black inferiority and to their application in a system of "natural" socioethnic hierarchy. The particular attributes of Ḥam and his descendants reiterated by Abravanel came from the stock of negative discursive images available to him. Yet Abravanel chose to use these specific images, rather than the variety of positive images also available, to be discussed further on in this chapter. The rhetorical excess spent on Ḥam and his descendants marks a departure from Abravanel's usual sobriety. This modal departure stemmed from the importance of making distinctions between the "us" Abravanel's readers would be trained to lead and the "them" they would need to take care not to emulate. Continued Abravanel in his commentary to Genesis 10:1:

[H]e is called Ḥam whether because his heart is hot within him [paraphrase of Deut. 19:6] to chase after his desires or whether because he is black and ugly, his

skin and looks and attributes like a Kushite. For Ham is from the category of "and all the brown sheep [Gen. 30:35]," that is to say, black in opposition to Yefet, who is beautiful in his form and ways.

Abravanel used the phrase "his heart is hot / *רחם לבבו*" for expressions of dangerous passion. It derives from the biblical description of the official cities of refuge provided for the accidental manslaughterer, which existed so that the kinsman of the killed would not see the killer, in order that "he not get stirred up [lit., 'that his heart not heat up / *לא ירחם לבבו*'] and he not pursue him" (Deut. 19:6).⁵⁶ Traditional Hebrew vocabulary also played with the connection of heat and passion.⁵⁷ Abravanel placed the dangerous passion of Ham in contiguity with his Blackness and ugliness, surface and interior of course reflecting each other.

The Blackness of Ham's descendants here seems to derive from Noah's curse. Elsewhere, however, Abravanel characterized the Blackness of Kushites as being "a natural thing," though without explaining the cause of this nature.⁵⁸ These two derivations were not, of course, mutually exclusive. Blackness as a physiognomic feature almost always appeared in Abravanel's writings as a negative attribute. For instance, he described the divine punishment that fell on Nebuchadnezzar thusly:

[H]is nature and temperament will change . . . and he will wash in the grass of the field and the dew from the skies, and his face will be colored, for instead of being ruddy with handsome and well-seeing eyes, now from snow in the day and ice at night and from the heat of the day his appearance will darken beyond blackness, and also in his sustenance will his portion be among the animals, [that is,] the grass of the earth.⁵⁹

The king's loss of his political status and human relations, which preceded these words, reinforced the degree to which he had been exiled from the *polis* that constitutes human society. His animal-like fate and intemperate darkened appearance reflected and proved his inner bestiality, in line with the many medieval images of the wild men of the forest and of antisocial melancholics. Civilized men, protected by social status and enforced political convention from the ravages of the outdoor world, carried an appropriately mild appearance.⁶⁰ While Nebuchadnezzar's blackness here did not pertain to Blacks, it coincided neatly with many of the meanings of Blackness. It signified the same falling away from "proper," "civilized" society as did Ham's Blackness.

In order to fully appreciate Abravanel's treatment of Ham, I will quickly review the trajectory of Ham in earlier discourse. From the Bible until Abravanel's time, Hebrew discourse depicted Ham overwhelmingly with negative features, not infrequently linking him with Blacks. Two of the three Rabbinic mentions

alluded in a vague way to skin change, one text punningly linking this to darkening. According to the Babylonian Talmud,

Our Rabbis taught: three had intercourse in the ark and were all stricken: the dog, the raven and Ham. The dog remains attached to the body of his mate after cohabitation, the raven conceives through his mouth, Ham was stricken in his skin.⁶¹

In the rabbinic exegetical anthology known as *Midrash ha-Gadol* or *Midrash Rabba* (= The Great Midrash), one finds a nearly identical recitation. As in the Talmud, Ham was said to have copulated in the ark, as did the dog; however, here the raven was not mentioned. This statement was attributed to R. Hiya, a prominent late *tannaitic* rabbi (ca. 250–350 C.E.) originally from Babylonia who lived in Palestine.⁶² About Ham's punishment, R. Hiya said: "Ham came forth hammed (lit., coaled [i.e., blackened?]) / *צא חם מפחם*." R. Huna, another leading early Babylonian rabbi,⁶³ expanded on some of the other talmudic material in the name of his teacher: "You have prevented me from doing something in the dark [i.e., cohabitation], therefore your seed will be ugly and dark-skinned. . . . You have prevented me from begetting a fourth son, therefore I curse your fourth son."⁶⁴

The biblical three sons of Noah probably alluded to the entire human species, divided into northern zones (Yefet), temperate zones (Shem), and southern zones (Ham), in the manner of a good (later) Hellenistic geographer. The talmudic fate of Ham, that he was "stricken in his skin / *לקה בעורו*," if not alluding to his Blackness probably derived from the oft-repeated Hellenistic theory linking melancholia with sores or eruptions on the skin (as cited). Ham's overall behavior easily fit many of the attributes said to accompany melancholia – his "foolish laughter," "absurd talk," "antisocial attitude," "lustfulness" – all attributes raised in various midrashic and exegetical treatments (and medieval Muslim writings). Appropriately enough, his punishment fit the symptoms of the disease. These passages from the Talmud and midrash allude as well to the skins of southern peoples burned by the sun (as in Greek: *aethiop* = burned face). Indeed, these rabbinic statements emerged precisely from this late Greek/early Roman Mediterranean milieu.⁶⁵ Daniel Boyarin pointed out that many of these Rabbinic authors lived in "Roman Palestine" and that in Roman iconography, "macrothallic blacks are not uncommon."⁶⁶ Obviously, some Jews living at the same time shared these views of oversexualized Blacks. Commenting on the degenerate Egyptians, the Christian writer Origen (mid-third century) reasoned in the same fashion about Ham, linking natural servitude, sin, and abnormal complexion even more explicitly, though only with regard to the Egyptians:

Look at the origin of the race and you will discover that their father Ham, who had laughed at his father's nakedness, deserved a judgment of this kind, that his son

Kena'an should be a servant to his brothers, in which case the condition of bondage would prove the wickedness of his conduct. Not without merit, therefore, does the discoloured posterity imitate the ignobility of the race.⁶⁷

The intimate conversations and debates that transpired between Origen and various rabbis in Palestine are well known. Their results here reflect the Hellenistic milieu in which they transpired.

The most outrageous Rabbinic depiction of Ham appeared in one version of a relatively obscure text of obscure origin, the early medieval Midrash Tanhuma:⁶⁸

And because Ham saw with his eyes the nakedness of his father, his eyes were made red; and because with his mouth he told his brothers, his lips were distended; and because he turned back [to look at his father's nakedness], the hair on his head and beard was singed; and because he did not cover the nakedness [of his father] he went about naked and his foreskin was elongated.⁶⁹

This passage did not even mention Blackness, yet its combination of elements cannot be anything but a parallel to the many similar statements in contemporary and earlier classical and Muslim discourse. Ibn al-Faqih wrote (ca. 902/3):

nor are they [Iraqis] overdone in the womb until they are burnt, so that the child comes out something between black and murky, malodorous, stinking, woolly-haired, with uneven limbs, deficient mind and depraved passions, such as the Zanj, the Ethiopians, and other blacks who resemble them.⁷⁰

The Tanhuma passage closely resembles the similarly detailed attention to physiognomy in the Arab historian Mas'udi (d. ca. 956), who attributed the following to classical antiquity:

Galen mentions ten specific characteristics of blacks – frizzy hair, thin eyebrows, broad nostrils, thick lips, pointed teeth, smelly skin, black pupils, furrowed feet and hands, developed genitalia, and excessive merriment. This author [Galen] explains this last quality in the black as a result of the imperfect organization of his brain, whence also derives the weakness of his intellect.⁷¹

By this time, indeed, Muslim discourse often used the term "Banū Hām" (= the sons of Ham) as a synonym for the Sudan and its inhabitants, that is, for East African Blacks.⁷²

Though obscure, the Tanhuma text was cited by later authorities. In treating the consequences of Ham's crime, David b. Avraham b. ha-Rambam or Maimuni (1222–1300; Egypt) reproduced the entire passage nearly verbatim, while extending the curse's provenance over all of Ham's descendants.⁷³ Zecharia b. Shlomo ha-Rofe, aka Yahyā ibn Suleiman al-Ṭabīb (first half of

fifteenth century; Yemen), quoted the Tanhuma passage more or less verbatim and went so far as to reverse the merciful continuation – in which the sinning body parts also served as the basis for the biblical injunction to free a slave whose master has damaged one of these important body parts – by making it the very basis for Ham's eternal enslavement.⁷⁴

Medieval Jewish authorities who held that Noah's curse fell onto all the progeny of Ham and not just Kena'an were not few or minor. For the most part, the nature of the curse pertained to servitude, following the biblical text, and not Blackness. Yosef Beḥor Shor (twelfth century; Orleans) explicated "a slave of slaves will he be" (Gen. 9:25) as meaning to all of his brothers who are slaves, the sons of Ham. Through the curse of Kena'an, therefore, Noah "cursed all the sons of Ham," which Beḥor Shor proved by interpreting Judges 6:8 ("I brought you up from Egypt and took you out of the house of slaves") to the effect that the Egyptians were slaves.⁷⁵ Several variants of the contemporary tosefot commentary to the Bible explicitly made the curse fall on both Kena'an and Ham; that is, both were made slaves of their respective brothers.⁷⁶ Although most of his venom is reserved for Kena'an, Yosef ibn Kaspi (1279–1340; Arles, Tarascon, Aragon, Catalonia, Majorca, Egypt, Fez) seems to have suggested that Ham and his seed bore the brunt of the curse as well.⁷⁷

Some texts less interested in fathoming the biblical sources according to scholarly criteria agreed with these maximalist interpretations. The literary *Divrei ha-Yamin shel Moshe Rabeinu* (= Chronicle of Our Rabbi Moshe), composed no later than the eleventh century, related ancient legends according to which Moshe helped the Kushites defeat their enemies, the Egyptians, for which he was rewarded with the Kushite princess as a wife and a forty-year reign over Kush. The hero did not consummate the marriage, however, because

he feared the God of his fathers and did not have sex with her, as he remembered the oath his father made his slave Eliezer swear: Do not take for my son a wife from the daughters of Kena'an [Gen. 24:3]. And also Yitshak did this when Ya'akov fled from Esav, having him swear: Do not marry with the children of Ham [a paraphrase of Gen. 28:1], for he reminded him that Noah gave the children of Ham as slaves to the descendants of Shem and Yefet.⁷⁸

Again indicating the situational pliability of these referents, the oath of Yitshak here replaced the Kena'an of the biblical text with Ham. It is intriguing to note, in light of the already-mentioned complicated construction process of Abravanel's biblical commentaries, that at one point he accepted this chronicle's veracity ("it is possible that it is true / אפשר שיהיה אמת"; comm. to Exod. 4:11), while elsewhere he denied it ("it is not fitting to depend on it / ואין ראוי לסמוך עליו"; comm. to Num. 12:1).⁷⁹

Concomitant with slaving in sub-Saharan Africa, Muslim discourse could be characterized as being of very similar cast when it came to Hām, whose genealogy and curse were no doubt known from Jewish sources. Again the pliable and situational nature of these curses and genealogies cannot be forgotten.⁸⁰ Muslim authors took the genealogy of Noah's sons and applied it as they saw fit to political and cultural exigencies. Many authors had the Black African people other than the Abyssinians, generally favored as being more civilized, stem from Kan'an, bearer of the curse.⁸¹ A tenth-century Egyptian legend, "A Short History of Wondrous Things," possibly an excerpt from a work of Mas'udi, considered Nimrod ■ Black as well as the world's first tyrant, while among the descendants of the Black Hām fell the Spaniards.⁸² The tenth-century Persian historian Abū-Ga'far Muḥammad b. Garīr Ṭabarī wrote that

Hām engendered all blacks and kinky-haired people, Yāfit all bright-faced and small-eyed people [i.e., the Turks] and Sām all those with a beautiful face and beautiful hair [i.e., Arabs and Persians]. Noah cursed Hām that the hair of his descendants should not grow past his ears and wherever his descendants meet the descendants of Sām, the former will be enslaved by the latter.⁸³

Šams ad-Dīn 'Abdallāh Muḥammad ad-Dimašqī (1256–1327) adduced the tradition that Ham had sex with ■ woman in the ark, despite Noah's prohibition, whereupon Nūḥ cursed him and "prayed to God to modify his seed."⁸⁴

Various Church Fathers and later Christian thinkers linked slavery and serfdom to Ham's descendants, though in varying ways.⁸⁵ Some medieval Christians, especially those within the Islamic orbit, also linked Ham to Blacks. The Arab Christian Eutychios of Alexandria or Sa'id ibn Bitriq (877–940) placed the Egyptians, Abyssinians, and other Black peoples under the family tree of Ham.⁸⁶ Gregory Abu'l Faraj or Gregorius Barhebraeus (1226–1286), leader of the Persian Jacobites, provides a perfect example of the flow of this semiotic material between religious cultures. Son of an Arabized Jew, this multilingual author's 1286 *Chronographie* made Japhet father of the White peoples (the Spanish, French, Greeks, Slavs, Bulgars, Turks, and Armenians), Shem progenitor of the Brown peoples, and Ham father of all the Blacks.⁸⁷ At least four versions of the Middle English *Cursor Mundi* had Cham or Cam cursed with his "offspring all" into servitude to his brothers.⁸⁸ Cham's descendants received Africa; "Per bla men wonys in," as the Fairfax rescension reads, or, in the words of a later redactor, "the coloured men live there."⁸⁹ The Blackness of Africans and the servitude of Cham's descendants appeared here as discrete rather than linked facts and probably had more to do with exoticism than anything else. The archbishop of Florence, Antonino Pieruzzi (1389–1459), used Noah's curse of Ham as proof that slavery was supported by divine law in addition to the law of nations and natural law.⁹⁰

Medieval Iberian authors utilized Cham (in Latin)/Cam (in Portuguese) as a tool for denouncing their territorial and religious enemies, the Muslims. Although ostensibly the biblical curse entailed servitude, this aspect appears to have been largely peripheral. The curse served instead to highlight the "racial" enmity of Islam toward Christendom. The *General estoria* of Alfonso X asserted that Noah cursed Cam, but then proceeded to quote the biblical verses targeting Canaan with the curse.⁹¹ Elsewhere, however, the curse was applied at length in two chapters to Cam, whom Noah cursed "through his sons and through his generations, and gave them in his curse as servants to Sem and Japhet and to their" descendants.⁹² These two chapters outlined the "principal enmity of the sons of Japhet and of those of Cam," and the "natural enmity of those of Sem and of Japhet against those of Cam, and of the Christians against the Moors," as the respective chapter headings inform us.⁹³ The cursed pagan descendants of Cam remained enemies of Christianity, despite the fact that some of them had been Christians in the past, because now Africa and many of its peoples stood under the thrall of the false religion of Mohammad. Bishop Alvarus Pelagius, author of the *Espelho dos Reis*, written between 1341 and 1344, probably drew on the *General estoria* for his own work. He indicted the "cursed generations" of Cham/Cam, citing Genesis 9 and Josephus in his "Histories."⁹⁴ But nothing here linked Cham/Cam to Blacks or even "Africa"; instead, the animus again fell on Islam. North Africa was thus the place where "formerly the name of Christ was sincerely respected, and today is inhabited by Mohammad."⁹⁵ Indeed, the operative genealogy for the author was that dividing the Muslims, descendants of the illegitimate son of Abraham with his Egyptian slave Hagar, from the Christians, descendants of Abraham with his legitimate wife Sarah.⁹⁶ What covenant, asked the author, "could exist between Christ and Mohammad, between the Son of God and Belial, between light and darkness, . . . between the faithful and the infidel, between the Christian and the Moor?"⁹⁷ It is possible that the fifteenth-century Alfonso Tostado stated that Cham's descendants merited punishment along with him, as he was cited by ■ seventeenth-century Portuguese author to this effect (see Chapter 6).⁹⁸

That Canaan drew far less wrath from Christian writers than he did from Jewish writers stems from the absence for Christian writers of the same kind of textual need to excoriate this ethnic obstacle to Israelite power and ethnic antithesis to Jewish values. Hence, shortly after Abravanel's composition of his biblical commentaries, the Spanish jurist Palacios Rubios brought forward Noah's curse of Cam/Canaan as but one of many explanations for the rise of the institution of slavery. Yet though writing to defend Spanish dominion in the Americas, Lopez de Palacio Rubios nowhere linked Noah's curse to any particular ethnic group.⁹⁹ For most medieval Christian authors who mentioned a curse on Cham/Ham, the matter appeared as an abstract explanation for the

human concoction of an institution not ordained by nature. Aquinas (1225–1274) asserted that through his crime, Cham brought the curse of slavery onto his descendants, while elsewhere stating that Canaan was punished for Cham's sin.¹⁰⁰ Neither Blackness nor "Africa" played any role whatsoever in the *Summa*. A fourteenth-century translation of Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica* into Portuguese retained only a tame version of the events of Genesis 9, in which Chanaan was cursed, and, like its source, skipped entirely the genealogies of Noah's sons.¹⁰¹

For Jewish authors, on the other hand, the genealogy of Ham bore clear, though flexible, ethno-religious significance. Yet the difficulty of ascertaining the referents behind these statements in Jewish discourse can also be glimpsed from several commentaries. One of the most beloved exegetes, Rashi, asserted that the talmudic punishment of Ham, that he was stricken in his skin, meant that "from him came Kush."¹⁰² Such a statement would seem to imply that the curse entailed the Blackness of some of his descendants. But the precise relation of this curse with the curse of servitude mentioned in the biblical text remained undefined. They might be dual curses effected onto the same figure (Ham), as some early modern authors suggested. They might be dual curses effected onto both figures (servitude onto Kena'an, Blackness onto Ham). These same difficulties of assignation can also be seen in the writings, mentioned earlier, of Zechariah b. Shlomo ha-Rofe, alias Yahyā ibn Suleiman al-Ṭabīb. Writing on Genesis 9:25 ("And he said, 'cursed is Kena'an'"), the author understood this to mean "that he [Kena'an] was removed from his possessions and that his body was made different from humans. For this reason one blesses: '[Blessed are You, God, who] makes the creatures different [from one another]' when one sees him." This blessing, which appears in slightly different versions in both the Babylonian and Jerusalem Talmuds, was recited on seeing a person or animal differing from the norm.¹⁰³ The list of spurs for reciting it begins, in both Talmuds, with a Kushite, such that it became a classic trope pertaining to Kushites. Yet Ha-Rofe/al-Ṭabīb applied it, and the statement of bodily deformation usually attached to Blacks, to Kena'an. Another manuscript of his writings, however, contained a different locution, in which Ham's body was made "black and his hair spoiled."¹⁰⁴ The difference in wording might be traceable to a scribe's intervention. To attribute more logic to the one variant than to the other, however, is to misunderstand the pliability of these senses and search for an irrelevant, if not nonexistent, "correct" urtext.

The view that the curse proffered by Noah fell onto Kushites must have had at times a fairly wide circulation. Avraham b. Meir ibn Ezra (1089–1164; born Tudela) already wrote specifically against it in two places (as did the later Muslim writer Ibn Khaldūn). The biblical story "mentioned Kena'an [Gen. 9:18] and not Kush because he/it [Noah/the Bible] cursed Kena'an."¹⁰⁵

"There are those," continued Ibn Ezra shortly afterward, "who say that the Kushites are slaves because Noah cursed Ham, but they forgot that the first king after the flood came from Kush" [i.e., Nimrod].¹⁰⁶ We cannot tell whether Ibn Ezra had Jewish or Muslim authorities in mind, since he mentioned no names.

By Abravanel's time, at least one Jewish writer explicitly communicated the notion that Ham stood accursed in both servitude and Blackness. The fourteenth-century Yemenite author Natanel b. Yeshayahu presented this in terms that make it difficult to determine whether he was alluding to the religious ignorance of Blacks alleged in Islamic discourse or to Canaanite immoralities purported in the Bible: "A slave of slaves": everyone serves God but he [Kena'an] serves them. 'Blessed be Adonai, God of Shem': that all of the prophets will come from Shem. . . . 'And let Kena'an be a slave to them': that they will be black and ugly and the *shekhinah* [God's presence] will not dwell among them."¹⁰⁷ The more canonical author Rashi, as was mentioned, implicitly asserted the same double curse by explicating Ham's punishment as being the spawning of the Black Kushites.

THE METONYMIC HAM: SYMBOL OF BLACKS AND BLACKNESS

The characteristics of Abravanel's Ham coincided, not surprisingly, with those he attributed to Blacks as a whole. He stated as much himself in his commentary to Genesis 10:1, immediately after telling readers about Ham's nature:

And you will see how the characteristics of these three fathers are found in the nations which come from them, for from Ham comes "Kush and Egypt and Libya and Kena'an" [Gen. 10:6], for they are all until today ugly looking and their figures are black as a raven, steeped in licentiousness and drawn after the animal lusts, lacking intelligence and knowledges and lacking [political] states and the degrees of good qualities and bravery.

Abravanel's Africans here display the already-cited characteristics deployed so often in earlier Jewish, Muslim, and Christian discourse. With the later Hellenistic period, one finds increasing deployment of Blacks as aesthetically unpleasant, fearsome, symbolic of physical abnormality, theological impurity, and moral evil.¹⁰⁸ Martial, Catullus, and Pliny saw black skin as a blemish.¹⁰⁹ The hero of the Byzantine national epic, Digenis Akritas, written between the tenth and fourteenth century, stemmed from a father who was a Syrian emir, attractive and blond, "not hateful like a Black."¹¹⁰ A widespread Christian view that found little echo in Jewish discourse presented Blacks as demons or devils. Caesarius of Heisterbach (ca. 1180–ca. 1240) described how the devil frolicked in the land of the Black Ethiopians.¹¹¹ The medieval Portuguese "Visão de Túndalo" rev-eled in demons black like coal, with teeth white like snow, tails like scorpions,

and nails of steel.¹¹² In a 1324 trial of an Irish witch, the accused was said to have had sexual intercourse with her "familiar," who could take the form of a cat, a shaggy black dog, or an Ethiopian.¹¹³ Parallel Jewish denigrations are not lacking, though the linkage of Blacks and demons was not one of their features.¹¹⁴ Based on an eisegesis of a talmudic story (B.T. Gittin 47a) about Resh Lakish selling himself to the Ludim (see Gen. 10:13, Isa. 66:19, Jer. 46:9, Ezek. 30:5, etc.), an eleventh-century dictionary of the talmudic and rabbinic vocabulary described these descendants of Ham as cannibals.¹¹⁵ Making use of several topoi, one popular thirteenth-century Hebrew critique of marriage featured a plot in which the hero's beautiful beloved was secretly replaced at the wedding with "a quarrelsome hag, black as a crow, with lips like two inflated bladders – anyone who saw would gasp."¹¹⁶ These perspectives continued to resonate into Abravanel's time and beyond.

For Abravanel, then, the debased state of Blacks derived from a combination of divine interventions: a prophetic curse, the structure of the terrestrial environment, and its influence on human (humoral) complexion. As for many Europeans, the African climate itself produced "licentious" natural growth, adding yet another climatic substrate to Abravanel's understanding of the cause of Africans' nature. For Abravanel, steeped as he was in classical and contemporary geography, Kush conjured up images of nature run riot. He described the trees discovered by Portuguese explorers along the coastal rivers of West Africa, which were enormous and could produce canoes large enough for several people.¹¹⁷ Explaining the plague of frogs visited upon the ancient Egyptians, he drew on Pliny as well as his understanding of the Portuguese voyages of his own day. The frogs, he argued, were actually crocodiles, who lived in no freshwater rivers other than the Nile, and in no saltwater seas other than the Ocean of Kush, as Pliny the Naturalist wrote, due to the intense heat. At the time of the plague, God brought them to Egypt from the Ocean of Kush by means of the western branch of the Nile, which (it was then believed) ran parallel to the equator, letting out somewhere near the island of São Tomé. Indeed, from contemporary experience, wrote Abravanel, it was known that the inhabitants of this island constantly had to fight against the invasions of these creatures onto the land, as they attacked and ate the residents' children.¹¹⁸

Abravanel presented the uncontrolled sexuality of Ham in the mythopoetic setting of biblical events. Yet in his commentary to Amos 9:7, he defended Blacks in Portugal from charges of lasciviousness. In this case, Abravanel protested against the insults of a tenth-century Karaite exegete from Jerusalem, Yefet b. Ali. Summarized David Goldenberg:

Yefet had interpreted a biblical verse (Amos 9:7) to refer to Black women "who are promiscuous and therefore no one knows who his father is." Abravanel: "I

don't know who told Yefet this practice of promiscuity among Black women, which he mentions. But in the country of my birth [Portugal] I have seen many of these people and their women are sexually loyal to their husbands unless they are prisoners and captive to their enemies. They are just like any other people."¹¹⁹

Abravanel himself made no mention of Yefet's Karaism, though some of his readers would certainly have known this background. In addition, while Abravanel attacked Yefet, he actually cited the statement from Abraham ibn Ezra, the canonical Spanish Jewish commentator, who "wrote [it] in the name of Yefet." Furthermore, other prominent medieval Jewish authors expressed the same opinion, quoting it authoritatively without contradiction.¹²⁰ It is true that Abravanel, whose text at least acknowledged that Ibn Ezra brought Yefet's opinion, chose to attack only the Karaite Yefet, although Yefet's statement about Black promiscuity was by no means unique nor original.¹²¹ One can even find Jewish authors who opined similarly without citing Yefet, such as Tanhum ben Yosef ha-Yerushalmi (d. 1291; Fustat, Egypt).¹²² Still, Abravanel's defense of the "normalcy" of Black sexuality comes across as unambiguous. In good humanist fashion, he brought evidence from his own experience, in which it was clear that Blacks acted according to the highest civilized standards unless their oppressive historical circumstance dictated otherwise.

Abravanel's conflicting passages regarding Blacks were written at different times and addressed different realms of discourse, the one abstract myth, the other actual living Blacks. Even within the mythopoetic realm, the attribution of qualities remained highly local. Discussing Isaiah 20:4, a verse sometimes applied to Ham and his punishment, Abravanel emphasized that "the Egyptians were more steeped in licentiousness than the Kushites."¹²³ Perhaps Ham's lack of understanding of the notion of honoring one's parents in Abravanel's commentary to Genesis stemmed from the widespread theory that Ethiopians lacked a sense of familial structure, their licentiousness and primitivity mirroring that of their physical environment. A Persian geographical tract from the tenth century noted that the Ethiopian Zanj "steal each other's children and sell them" as slaves to foreign Muslim merchants.¹²⁴ Hence, the many statements that Ethiopians engaged in sexual relations, forbidden by civilized codes of ethics, with their siblings or parents.¹²⁵ In this view, families, a cultural product, would not have been known to primitives who lived like animals.¹²⁶ Yet Abravanel dismissed all these derogatory notions when defending the behavior of actual Blacks living in Portugal.

So far I have traced Abravanel's statements regarding Ham and Blacks through the lens of earlier texts. His assertions offered little new in and of themselves. I will now address the question of how to understand his textual choices. Why

did he choose to include or exclude certain strands of the tradition regarding Ham and Blacks? How can his conflicting statements be explained?

SOCIOLOGY IN/OF THE TEXT

A 1472 letter from Abravanel presents another certainly relevant text for investigating his attitude toward Blacks. This letter to a friend, Yehiel of Pisa, comes from a genre other than biblical commentary. Here, Don Isaac announced that he was sending a Kushite maidservant as a gift. Abravanel's friend in Pisa, Yehiel, was a prominent scholar and banker. Abravanel's wife, according to his letter, decided to give to Yehiel's wife a Kushite maidservant whom Abravanel had presented to her.¹²⁷ Here appears the opening (and need) for expanding the realm of texts discussed. One needs to treat the relation between the "literary" text, Abravanel's biblical commentary, and this letter, which is at once a "casual" and "personal," yet highly "social" text. As most of the scholarly treatments of Jewish attitudes toward Blacks comprised purely literary surveys, little effort has been made to explore the socioeconomic factors producing the various texts described.

The social context of medieval views of Ham and Kushites clearly related in general to the slave status of Blacks in the Greco-Roman and then Muslim Mediterranean world. Most of the quoted statements about Ham and Kushites derive from authors living in areas where the owning and selling of Black slaves comprised a portion of the slave economy. Negative perceptions of Blacks circulated throughout the discourse of the dominant cultures. It should be no surprise that the discourse of the minority Jewish population hosted such patterns as well.

But even this sociological explanation is not enough. Jewish discourse prior to Abravanel – from the same slaveholding regions – also produced positive evaluations of Kushites, a phenomenon equally true for Christian and Muslim discourse.¹²⁸ One talmudic text (B.T. Sukkah 53a) elaborated King Shlomo's affection for two of his Kushite scribes and his efforts to protect them from death. A common later poetic figuration of Blackness was purely aesthetic. Black contrasted with white produced a pleasing contrast of colors, encompassing the totality of possibilities. R. Yeshayahu da Trani (tenth century; southern Italy) glossed the lover's black hair of Song of Songs 5:10 by stating: "black as a raven": this is attractive on a white and ruddy person."¹²⁹ Comparing night's dark beauty to that of a Black constituted a common trope for both Jewish and Muslim poets on the Iberian peninsula from the tenth through thirteenth centuries.¹³⁰ The Jewish traveler Benjamin of Tudela described the Black inhabitants of Quilon, the southern tip of India; though sun worshipers and superstitious,

they "are honest in commerce."¹³¹ Even Ham at times carried positive valence. Efra'im b. Shimshon (twelfth century; Ashkenaz) remarked that the three sons of Noah corresponded to the three positive attributes of Noah: "'righteous' [Gen. 6:9], 'perfect' [ibid.], 'Noah walked with God' [ibid.]."¹³² Yet Abravanel chose to overlook these sorts of statements in his commentary to Genesis. The question remains how to explicate the difference of attitude even within slaveholding societies, within the sphere of intellectual artisans of the dominant culture.

The wealth and status of Isaac Abravanel were such as made him one of a handful of the most exceptional Jews in Portugal.¹³³ As a servant to the Portuguese monarchy and some members of the nobility, Abravanel received privileges that were extraordinary for a Jew. By 1464, he had received exemption from wearing the six-pointed red star badge that ordinary Jews were required to sew onto their clothes to distinguish them from Christians, as well as permission to ride a mule (even saddled and bridled), carry weapons, and stay at inns belonging to Christians.¹³⁴ In 1472, he received permission to live in Lisbon outside of the *judaria*.¹³⁵ In 1478, the Duke and the Duchess of Bragança (she was sister to the king) rewarded Abravanel's services with the gift of a country estate (*casal*) outside of Lisbon.¹³⁶ In addition, Abravanel owned multiple houses – at least six – in Lisbon's *judaria grande*, including presumably his permanent residence.¹³⁷ He himself described his wealth in Portugal as including slaves: "and among my people I added to all that was before me . . . men and women slaves and the children of my house, eaters of my bread, my wool and my linen . . . for I passed all my goodness before me [paraphrase of Exod. 33:19], I did not know how to count [Ps. 71:15]."¹³⁸ Concomitant with the aspirations of his class, Abravanel's father, Judah, had hosted in the "family mansion . . . gatherings of Jewish and Christian aristocracy."¹³⁹

It is difficult to assess the exact nature of the business in which Abravanel engaged while in Portugal and Spain. His grandfather Samuel had served the court of Castile during the reigns of three kings, eventually taking over the kingdom's financial administration as *contador mayor*. His father Judah had been the treasurer of Prince Fernão and served other nobles as well.¹⁴⁰ B. Netanyahu described the business undertakings of Yitshak's father Judah as including "tax-farming, banking and large-scale imports from Flanders."¹⁴¹ Yitshak Abravanel's nephew and son-in-law Yosef Abravanel (written as Yoçe or Iuçe) exported sugar from Madeira, accumulating as a result properties and business rights both there and in Portugal.¹⁴² Further, this Yosef oversaw the finances of the estates of the Portuguese duke who possessed the rights to the Guinea trade (more on this later). The exact nature of Yitshak Abravanel's business endeavors remains unclear. In royal letters of 1463 and 1464, he is called simply "a merchant."¹⁴³

In the early 1470s, he was one of the chief suppliers of fine cloth to the king and other nobles.¹⁴⁴

But what is the exact relationship between the intensity of Abravanel's extended passage about Ham and Kushites in his commentary to Genesis and the institution of slavery? Just how does it connect with the economic, hence social and mental, structures resulting from the enslavement of a group? It would seem logical to assume that those Rabbinic and medieval authors who voiced anti-Black sentiments lived in societies in which Blacks were slaves and thus despised. Yet even slaveholding societies do not comprise homogeneous entities, especially when Blacks made up an insignificant percentage of the medieval slave population. Furthermore, one can readily find anti-Black prejudice among authors writing from locales where Blacks hardly existed, if at all. Thinking mostly of the Caribbean, H. Hoetink thought that "no causal link exists, nor does historical continuity always have to be expected, between a mild or harsh slavery, on the one hand, and mild or respectively tense race relations on the other."¹⁴⁵ Indeed, it makes more sense to assume that such prejudices against Others circulate in a fairly diffuse fashion, often constituting a component of self-identity construction even where the Other is not directly oppressed and threatening the oppressing class. Rather than attempting to link the modalities of Abravanel's texts to specific socioeconomic historical situations and to a set of supposedly concomitant attitudes, one should read them as participating, as did all biblical exegesis by formal definition, in one aspect of the double function of ideology: providing "a reproduction of the ability to manipulate the ruling ideology correctly for the agents of exploitation and repression, so that they too will provide for the domination of the ruling class 'in words.'"¹⁴⁶ Yet the definition of "correct" manipulation of previous semiotic units obviously differed from writer to writer. The character of Abravanel's extended comments on Ham and Kushites becomes clearer if one compares them with the treatment accorded Ham and Kushites by some of Abravanel's contemporaries. In the texts of several rabbis who shared Abravanel's Portuguese and Spanish background, we find both less denigrating portraits of Ham and no debasement of Kushites (see the examples brought in Chapters 4 and 6).

To what should one attribute these various Jewish perspectives on Blacks? Do the sympathetic voices partake of "Jewish" attitudes? Perhaps they partake of "Portuguese" or "Spanish" attitudes? This is not to raise the issue of influence, to prove that Abravanel's ambivalent attitude toward Blacks came from non-Jewish or Jewish sources. In the works of a figure such as Abravanel, the intermingling of different discourses cannot be neatly untangled, despite his and later scholars' declarations of his "hatred of 'Greek philosophy.'"¹⁴⁷ Tracing semiotic differences, nuances, rejections, or borrowings is necessary not for the

sake of assigning influence (and therefore causative power) but for the sake of establishing by comparative work a proper assessment of Abravanel's positions.

ABRAVANEL, NATION, CLASS

Scholars have argued that before the creation of the slave societies of the Americas, Iberians lacked "racist" attitudes.¹⁴⁸ Elizabeth Feist Hirsch voiced the maximal version of this theory when she stated that "the Portuguese had an advantage over other colonizing powers. They did not know any racial strife and treated their slaves well."¹⁴⁹ C. R. Boxer provided a more nuanced appreciation of the complexities and transformations of Portuguese attitudes toward Blacks. According to Boxer's understanding, Iberian attitudes in the first decades of contact with sub-Saharan Africans, despite negative perceptions of Blacks, did not produce color bars to Black participation in religious and cultural life. The famous cultural relativism of Peter Martyr (early sixteenth century), an Italian humanist living in Spain, has been said to indicate the lack of "rigid" "racial" attitudes: "The Ethiopian considers that black is a more beautiful color than white, while the white man thinks otherwise. . . . It is clearly a reaction of the emotions, and not a reasoned conclusion, that leads the human race into such absurdities, and every district is swayed by its own taste."¹⁵⁰ Only in the sixteenth century, in this scholarly view, with the development of the slave trade and an increase in the number of Blacks in Portugal and Spain, did Portuguese and Spanish discourse develop "real" "race prejudice" against Black Africans.¹⁵¹

Abravanel's ambivalent depictions of Africans, therefore, came right at the cusp of the transformation of Iberian society from a typically ethnocentric medieval culture to a culture based at least partially on an abstract scale of human skin color. Already in the late fifteenth century, Iberian society was refashioning medieval notions about pagans and barbarians into a fairly consistent denigrating discourse about Blacks. The Italian philosopher Giulio Landi wrote in 1523 that the Portuguese assessed sub-Saharan slaves by three means: whether they were 1) Christian or not; 2) freeborn or born of slaves; and (3) Black or mulatto.¹⁵² One comic theatrical figure of a Black described the favorite foods of her native land — red lizards, dogs' heads, beetles — all of which would have induced the early-sixteenth-century Iberian audience's disgust.¹⁵³ Writing in 1520 from New Spain, Hernán Cortés described the Mexica as "such an orderly and intelligent people that the best in Africa cannot equal them."¹⁵⁴ By 1534, in an effort to reduce scandal, improve decorum, and ensure sanctity, Black men and women had been prohibited from participating in the Easter Sunday presentations of the three Marys held in Spanish churches.¹⁵⁵ For somewhat similar reasons, the Valencian guild of cobblers were already prohibiting Blacks as apprentices in the mid-fifteenth century (along with slaves, sons of slaves, and Muslims).¹⁵⁶

Intermarriage with Blacks was common but not always unopposed.¹⁵⁷ But even the Portuguese willingness to enter concubine marriages with African women in Africa bespeaks the limits of the initial tolerance; such arrangements always evinced a sexual, commercial, or administrative motivation and nearly always stood lower in status than "real" marriages with White women.¹⁵⁸ Initially, some Africans were trained as catechists and priests, but Feist Hirsch herself recounted the failure of the Ethiopian Christians to gain acceptance from the papacy, which rejected them as monophysites and followers of many Old Testament practices.¹⁵⁹ This is not to argue for a monolithic slave system and extreme pigmentocracy in Portugal; attitudes and practices allowed individual Blacks and mulattos some forms of advancement and liberation, while closing off others.¹⁶⁰

Abravanel's opinions about Blacks can also be collated with his similarly ambivalent attitude toward slavery, some of which he seems to have picked up from the encyclopedic works of the Catholic Spanish theologian and bishop Alfonso de Madrigal, el Tostado.¹⁶¹ Thus, Abravanel agreed with the many Christian authorities who saw in slavery an unnatural system, that is, of human concoction.¹⁶² Many thinkers concurred, however, that slavery nonetheless represented a positive good for humans in their fallen state. Abravanel seems to have borrowed other features of the writing style of his Christian contemporaries. His system of prefacing the commentary to each biblical book with an introductory overview of the book, its author, the date of its composition, and its contents imitated that of Spanish Christian theologians, such as Tostado.¹⁶³ In short, he stands as a typically polyglot Renaissance scholar, citing sources from all of the important traditions. Indeed, Abravanel on occasion preferred Christian interpretations of biblical passages over Jewish ones.¹⁶⁴

The inconsistency in Abravanel's statements about Blacks – here attacking them, there defending them – may well have been due to the protracted and troubled gestation period of his writings. But a more substantive hypothesis can be offered as well. His protest against views of Black licentiousness can be classed along with statements from contemporary discourse reporting the new experiences and observations of explorers and face-to-face contact with exotic peoples. Mercantile relations presented travelers with fully functioning, complex societies and cities. The travel literature of the first voyagers to sub-Saharan African is replete with such qualifications to inherited stereotypes.¹⁶⁵ The reports written by travelers, though imbued with the values of theology and ethnocentrism, showed far more interest than those written by official chroniclers in neutral depiction, direct observation, and reasoning from the book of nature.¹⁶⁶

Abravanel possibly knew about the contributions made toward solving the navigational aporias posed to Portuguese mariners by the unknown (to them) Southern Hemisphere from fellow Jews, such as Jacob b. Abraham Cresques,

the brothers Moises and Joseph Vizinho (or Vecinho), and Abraham Zakkut (Zacuto), Vizinho's teacher, who served Prince Henrique, King Duarte, João II, and Manuel, in turn.¹⁶⁷ Abravanel fled Portugal two years before 1485, when Afonso V made extensive grants to the settlers of São Tomé for trading in the region of the "slave rivers," and three years before 1486, when the king formalized the slave trade by establishing a position entitled the *almoxarifado dos escravos* for oversight and collection of royal revenues.¹⁶⁸ In 1485, the king sent José Vizinho and another Jewish astronomer to Guinea, to determine the best method of calculating latitudes at the equator itself.¹⁶⁹ Abravanel gave away little in the brief mention in his commentary to Genesis of Portuguese overseas exploration, and it is hard to say whether he learned of it second- or third-hand, as did most people. Eric Lawee reminded us, however, that while Afonso was sponsoring expeditions to Africa, Abravanel "was a member of his inner circle, in which geographic speculation was rife."¹⁷⁰ Various passages indicate his interest and familiarity with new Portuguese travels. In two different tracts, Abravanel described the Portuguese method of exploring the coastal rivers of Africa and some of their findings.¹⁷¹

Abravanel's defense of the sexual loyalty of Black slaves in Portugal relied on the testimony of his eyewitness experience. These qualifications in Abravanel stand in the same tension with his other statements about Blacks, as such conflicting statements do in the general literature of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. When operating on an abstract mythopoetic level, Abravanel deployed discourse that helped construct a purely ideational view of the place of various peoples in the increasingly conflicted Mediterranean world; when operating on the level of "scientific" observation, he complicated this very sort of worldview.

Abravanel's ambivalent Africans have everything to do with the class of the population consuming and producing discourse about Blacks. I use the term "class" in a loose socioeconomic sense to indicate the often intertwined network of professionals and rulers (clergy, scribes, intellectuals, physicians, merchants, nobility). Abravanel's ownership and control over a Kushite maidservant is not incidental to his position within this class. The reception or rejection of Blacks and Blackness among Iberians had much to do with class. Visiting Portugal and Blackness among Iberians had much to do with class. Visiting Portugal in 1466, the Bohemian knight Leo of Rozmítal was granted by the king the choice of any present he would like. The knight asked for two Black slaves, at which the king's brother, Fernão, Duke of Viséu, burst out laughing, saying that they were of no value. His response makes an apt statement of the enslaver's perspective:

Friend, that which you ask is of no value. You should ask for something greater and more worthy of your position than Ethiopians. But since you ask only this, I beg

you add a third present from me, namely an ape, so that you may return richly dowered to your country. . . . Those things [Ethiopians] are plentiful with us. The King, my brother, has three towns in Africa, in which each year he leads his armies, and after each expedition, however unprofitable or small the return, he does not return emptyhanded, for he brings back no less than 100,000 or more Ethiopians of both sexes, which are sold like cattle.¹⁷²

Portuguese nobles in general might not have shared empathy for Muslim or pagan slaves, especially Duke Fernão of Viseu, who inherited his title and its privileges concerning the Guinea trade upon the death of its previous holder in 1460, his uncle Prince Henrique, called "the Navigator."¹⁷³ According to C. R. Boxer, the "Aristotelian theory of the natural inferiority of some races to others [was] a theory which was very popular with the great majority of Iberian missionaries and conquistadores . . . with 'dominion over palm and pine' and over 'lesser breeds without the law.'"¹⁷⁴ Not surprisingly, in 1446 the bishop of the Algarve sponsored a slave-collecting voyage.¹⁷⁵

Blackness as a bureaucratic tool developed among the classes involved with its ideological production: the nobility (capitalist and/or conquistador) and bourgeoisie (merchants, scribes, and theologians and often educated ship captains). According to this view, already before the sixteenth century Black slaves were categorized as *peças*, pieces of merchandise, alongside *peças* of cloth or brass manillas. The trade in Blacks – very likely several hundred in most years – constituted just one of the many enterprises of monarchic capitalism in fifteenth-century Portugal and thus fell completely under the Crown's control, from the trade's stimulation to its administration.¹⁷⁶ At first, the cargoes of slaves coming into Portugal came under the jurisdiction of Prince Henrique, third son of João I, who had duties assessed (equivalent to one-fifth of all profit) and then auctioned the slaves off.¹⁷⁷ With the 1460s, Afonso V (reigned 1438 to 1443 [as a minor] and as an adult from 1443 to 1481), for whom Abravanel served as an advisor, reclaimed and consolidated the Guinea and slave trades under his own direct power. In 1459, he granted exclusive brokerage rights in the Lisbon slave market to D. Garcia de Castro, to the consternation of city burghers, who no doubt resented their exclusion from the opportunity.¹⁷⁸ Due to the active commerce, in 1461 the king ordered a new fort to be built at Arguim. In 1463, he had the administration of the Arguim trade moved from Lagos in the south to Lisbon.¹⁷⁹ João II, Afonso's successor and nephew, whom Abravanel also briefly served, built another fort further south at São Jorge da Mina (around the so-called slave rivers/*Rios da escravos*, now Benin) in 1482. That same year, if not earlier, João centralized all of the maritime and commercial activity in the newly established Mina House, whose shops (*armazéns*) constructed ships, acquired nautical equipment, oversaw piloting, drew up maps, and recruited

ships' crews.¹⁸⁰ The slaves coming to Lisbon belonged by right to the king, but the unwieldy operations were contracted out beginning in 1469, the king receiving vast annual payments plus a twentieth of all profits (the same percent taken on all imports from overseas). In 1474, Afonso retook complete control of overseas activity, with the Guinea trade going to Crown Prince João; a royal ordinance banned under penalty of death "contracts, wars, trade, and enslavement of Moors [which included Blacks] without royal license."¹⁸¹

Those who served in high-ranking positions in the slave trade, even as private citizens, at first came from the bourgeois or noble classes and often went into the court, in keeping with medieval policy for staffing the extending arms of empire.¹⁸² After returning with his expedition from Africa in 1444, D. Henrique knighted the commoner Lançarote.¹⁸³ Impressed with the profit potential, that same year a group of Lagos burghers, headed by the city *almoxarife*, applied to Henrique for a license to sail to Guinea.¹⁸⁴ In 1462, Afonso issued a two-year license for private trading in West Africa, free of taxes and customs, to D. Duarte de Menezes, Count of Viana.¹⁸⁵ In 1469, Afonso leased the contract for the Guinea trade to the wealthy Lisbon merchant Fernão Gomes for a period of five years (for the price of 200,000 réis annually), at the end of which Gomes was appointed to the royal council and received "nobility of a new coat of arms, an escutcheon embossed with a silver field and three heads of Blacks, each one with three gold rings in the ears and nose and a collar of gold."¹⁸⁶ Though discussing the early sixteenth century, nothing seems to contradict Ivana Elbl's assertion that "[m]any important slave traders active in the West African Islands were *cavaleiros* and *fidalgos*" already during the previous century.¹⁸⁷ The first official *almoxarife* and *fidalgos*, appointed by Afonso in 1486, was João do Porto, "a member of the royal court."¹⁸⁸ Guilds, made up of urban trade elites, resisted the upward mobility of Blacks; these were the same guilds producing antagonism toward Jewish participation, the same guilds helping formulate blood-purity notions and social arrangements based on them.¹⁸⁹

Much evidence leaves the impression that those without formal education remained outside the (direct) influence of the discursive apparatus interested in producing "race" as a concept. The royal chronicler, Gomes Eanes da Zurara, producing "race" as a concept. The royal chronicler, Gomes Eanes da Zurara, obliquely revealed (or learned from his source, Afonso Cerveira) how the first slave auction at Lagos in 1444 was interrupted by the gathered crowds, who were enraged at seeing the separation of families.¹⁹⁰ The offended masses comprised mostly townspeople and local peasants, while their action came despite the presence of Prince Henrique on horseback, there to oversee the well-being of his profits, the royal fifth. Another source of opposition to the importation of Blacks into Portugal (and of tension between policy makers and citizens) might have been the practice, at least under Afonso V, of distributing the captured women and children "amongst his cities to the citizens, who are obliged to keep

them at their own expense," until the latter grow up and can be sold.¹⁹¹ Profits, needless to say, went primarily to the Crown. The frequent intermarriage between Blacks, mulattos, and Whites transpired among the lowest echelons of the urban population, the plebeians. Douglas Cope showed how this group in early Mexico City bore little if any consciousness of race, and one can infer similar attitudes on the Iberian peninsula from evidence concerning the early history of Blacks there.¹⁹²

Such a simplistic class breakdown ultimately fails, of course, since one finds Catholic theologians protesting against the slave trade, Christian chroniclers and rabbis evincing empathy with Black captives and slaves, and "plebeian" ship crews engaging in the most inhuman behavior imaginable toward people. Still, to follow a rough class analysis allows the highlighting of certain features in the production of discourse about Blacks, in this case by Abravanel, who, of course, constituted no ordinary scholar. His abilities as an economic analyst and advisor, as a courtier, and as a mediator between dominant and minority communities gained for him access to the monarchs of both Castile and Portugal (and later other realms). His wealth – up through his flight from Portugal in 1483; after that he retrieved and lost various fortunes in later expulsions from Castile and Naples – placed him as close to the top as one could hope to get. His lifelong engagement in commerce aided his rise. Like almost all of the Jewish "middle class," Abravanel belonged to the rising segment of urban citizens by birth, upbringing, and temperament as well as by wealth.¹⁹³ His essentially bourgeois, humanist outlook comes across clearly in his writings.¹⁹⁴ He lovingly detailed the results of his business success and wealth, as cited. He complained that business occupied his adult life to such a degree that he had no time for study or contemplation; only in later life could he compose his biblical commentaries.¹⁹⁵ His humanist exegetical style was eminently sober, commonsensical, and based on close reading of the biblical text in light of historical and philological scholarship. Some have seen in his attacks on earlier Jewish authorities, such as his accusation that R. David Kimhi plagiarized from others (an accusation of which Abravanel himself has been found guilty), evidence that he "pride[d] himself upon his originality."¹⁹⁶ He obviously cared enough about tracking his own prolific output to record the dates and circumstances in which he composed most of his works. He boasted about the fact that he was the first commentator "to deal systematically with the discrepancies between parallel passages in the Bible," such as are found between 2 Samuel and 1 Chronicles, while in one work he related his discovery of variant readings in some editions of Pirke d'Rabi Eliezer – both typical textual methodology for humanist scholars after Lorenzo Valla (1407–1457) and Angelo Poliziano (1454–1494), if not earlier.¹⁹⁷ It must be said that no evidence links Abravanel directly with the trading in slaves. As mentioned, his son-in-law imported sugar from Madeira, in addition

to running the finances for the Duke of Viseu. Abravanel appears to have become a confidant of Afonso V between 1472 and 1475, prior to which he served the House of the Duke of Bragança, Portugal's most powerful family, said to be even richer than the king.¹⁹⁸ It was Afonso's successor, João II (began reigning in 1481), who more actively revived the Guinea ventures, which had been flagging since the death of Henrique the Navigator in 1460; Afonso was called "the African" mostly for his obsession with ousting the Muslims from Morocco.¹⁹⁹ Still, Afonso did not entirely neglect Guinea. It is possible that a link exists between Abravanel's entrance into Afonso's service and the king's interest in the Guinea trade and explorations beginning in 1474, but no documents support this speculation. We know only that between 1478 and 1480, Abravanel stood as the second most important funder of Afonso's royal "defense" fund.²⁰⁰ Although no source tells us specifically that Abravanel counseled either monarch concerning the Guinea trade or involved himself in its administration, Abravanel himself boasted of being "close to the king [Afonso]," who "based his decisions on my advice." B. Netanyahu wrote that Abravanel "became [Afonso's] most trusted councillor."²⁰¹ Abravanel's relationship with João was not anywhere near as close as the intimacy he had enjoyed with Afonso. Abravanel found reason to deeply dislike João in the king's efforts to centralize all power in himself, his anti-Jewish policies, and his difficult and tyrannical personality. Indeed, Abravanel fled Portugal in 1483 precisely because he was suspected of serving as the House of Bragança's agent at court and of being involved in alleged plots against the king. B. Netanyahu thought that Abravanel might indeed have been siding with the nobles of the court against the king, in the hopes of investing the Jews' security in more than the sole, unreliable figure of João II.²⁰² Abravanel seemed to rebuke the African expansion of Portugal, writing as if the king had attempted to take lands that didn't belong to him.²⁰³ But nowhere did he criticize Portuguese slaving practices and policies or those of any other nation, despite a few expressions of moral dismay about the general existence of slavery.

CONTESTING STATUS: A FUNCTION OF OTHERING

Like all Jews, the Jews serving the Portuguese Crown lived, according to medieval law, as servants of the king. It is not clear that they could have refused their service to the king. They were not slaves, however, whose interest to the Crown lay in the value of their bodies, an interest stemming from preconceptions about Black physicality and reiterated in the treatment accorded to Blacks. These Jewish servants of the king were not branded, as was each Black slave, who was "purchased on the king's account" "with the royal mark, consisting of the design of a cross placed on the upper right arm."²⁰⁴ The Jewish sign marked their clothing, not their body. The most elite Jews even acquired

permission to dispense with it. Yet both Blacks and Jews suffered the exploitation of the Portuguese royalty, as expressed in the fact that the second *almoxarife dos escravos*, Pero Pessoa, "had acted as the customs officer who received the duty payments made by Castilian Jews who chose to enter Portugal following the Spanish expulsion edict" of 1492.²⁰⁵

M. M. Bakhtin suggested that the grotesque bodies of the monstrous races of Africa served during the Renaissance to affirm dialectically the ordered, classical body of the European elite.²⁰⁶ In Abravanel's commentary to Genesis 10:1, this sense of order was imparted to those who would participate in community leadership, his educated readers. (It should be remembered that Abravanel himself was not a rabbi but a community leader by virtue of wealth and status.) One would think that, as a Jew, Abravanel would have opposed Ham to Shem and not Yefet in his commentary to Genesis 10:1 ("For Ham is from the category of 'and all the brown sheep [Gen. 30:35],' that is to say, black in opposition to Yefet, who is beautiful in his form and ways"). But Shem is not absent. The reference to the brown sheep, one of the varieties by which the biblical Ya'akov distinguished his flocks from Laban's, provides the mechanism for understanding how Ya'akov/Shem/the Jew chooses between metaphysical empires – Europe or Africa – represented by their aesthetic and moral manifestations. Abravanel expressed explicitly the aspirations behind such Jewish anxieties when he expressed his admiration for the "sons of Yefet":

How beautiful are all their deeds, their conduct, their politics, the manner of their rule and their prowess; all of them are beautiful in form and appearance.²⁰⁷

While these words of praise were ostensibly aimed at classical Greece and Rome and are quite typical of the Renaissance reevaluation of the ancients, the passage hints as well at a more recent Jewish reappraisal. That such praise came from the pen of a man who had witnessed the recent destruction of two separate Jewish civilizations by Iberian "sons of Yefet" well conveys the depth of the desires at work constructing his identity. It could be that a similar show of affection for aspects of the general culture led one married couple, from a family of Iberian refugees in Salonika, a family which had lost at least two ancestors to the flames of the Inquisition, to give their first son the extremely rare and odd Jewish name Yefet.²⁰⁸

Whether a derivation of classical Jewish sources or of contemporary processes of identity formation, for Abravanel one of the commonalities shared by Iberian Jews and Catholics was their Whiteness. Reiterating a statement of Rashi's, Abravanel wrote that the patriarch Abraham recognized Sarai's beauty at their journey into Egypt (Gen. 12:11) because the Egyptians were "black and ugly," while Sarai's attractiveness "consisted of her whiteness."²⁰⁹ The contrast led Abraham to worry for her safety among people who had never before seen

such beauty. Esav, dominated by his passions, by his bloodthirstiness, by the red and black humors linked to Kena'an and Yishma'el, whose descendants would be enslaved to those of Ya'akov, stood as the opposite of Ya'akov in complexion and nature. Perhaps not surprisingly, among his other noble qualities, Abravanel described Ya'akov as "a white man."²¹⁰ Given such a schema melding traditional Jewish and up-to-date Iberian ethnocentrism, Blacks could only represent ignoble contraries. While Abravanel defended Blacks from the kinds of maligning often flung at Jews, Blacks mainly served him as a foil through whom Jews could be construed implicitly as *fidalgos*.

Jews and Their Slaves

Theory and Reality

This chapter presents a brief survey of some of the issues surrounding the holding of slaves by Jews. It covers the external legal discourse of Christian and Muslim legislation, as well as the internal legal discourse of *halakha* from the Middle Ages to the early modern period. In addition, I discuss the realities of Jewish slaveholding in light of the ways non-Jewish discourse problematized this matter. Given the pressures against it, Jewish slave owning remained minimal. Only with the confluence of relative Protestant religious tolerance and the socioeconomic needs generated by overseas colonization did Jews emerge as players of note in the slave economy of western European Protestant nations.

THEORY AND REALITY UNDER CATHOLICISM

Almost all medieval Christian rulers forbade Jews to own Christian slaves or employ Christian servants. Many rulers forbade them to trade in slaves. This attitude derived from the time of the Roman Emperor Constantine, when the newly regnant Church Councils sought to support the spread of Christianity, prohibiting Jews from possessing Christian slaves and even from converting non-Christian slaves to Judaism.¹ The anxiety here was twofold: first, that a despised subaltern group should not exercise a privilege of power, such as owning slaves; second, that a group ideologically condemned to heresy should not entice slaves under its dominion to its heresy.

As Catholic national identity grew, so too did legislation limiting the power of Jews to employ Christians in their domestic sphere. The employment of Christian servants and the owning of Christian slaves by Jews faced increasingly restrictive legislation in medieval Spain. After the promulgation of the *Siete Partidas* of Alfonso X in 1261, Jews in Spain (along with Moors and heretics) were forbidden to possess Christian slaves, although they could employ Christians as laborers, agricultural help, and guards or escorts during travel.² In

the first quarter of the fourteenth century, Castile effectively banned Jews from using Christian wet nurses, prohibiting Christian women from nursing or rearing Jewish children, legislation reiterated in 1335 by the Council of Salamanca, which buttressed the prohibition with the penalty of excommunication, and in 1380 by Juan I, who decreed that Christians could not nurse the children of Jews (or Moors), under penalty of a 600 maravedi fine.³ Among the laws passed at Briviesca in 1387 was one that forbade Jews (and Moors) to have live-in Christian servants, under penalty of the confiscation of their goods – a third of which would go to the informer who turned them in.⁴ Toward the end of 1411, some members of Juan II's council proclaimed the same ban again.⁵ The next year, legislation issued in the name of the king (but signed only by the queen, the king being less than eight years old) decreed that "[n]o Jews or Moors are to have Christian lacqueys or domestics, or any other persons to serve them, execute their orders, perform their household work, cook their victuals, or do any thing for them on Sabbaths, as lighting fires, carrying wine or similar articles; nor have Christians to nurse their children, nor to be their herdsmen, gardeners, or shepherds."⁶ Six months later, however, the king signed similar laws that made the ban on servants total, extending it to include Moors and other non-Christians.⁷ In fifteenth-century Venice, Christian servants "were forbidden to eat, drink, or sleep in the homes" of Jewish employers, and permits to work as servants in the Jewish quarter generally were not given to the young, who were seen as needing protection.⁸ Other examples are by no means lacking. The repeated promulgation of limits and bans on Jewish slaveholding shows both the strength of the desire to achieve their purpose as well as the failure to do so completely.

Under Catholicism, Jews were frequently entitled to hold pagan slaves or slaves of the enemy religion, *de jure* and *de facto*.⁹ The ownership of slaves by Jews in Muslim and Christian Spain before the fourteenth century has been well documented by scholars.¹⁰ Permission for the Jews to own slaves depended always on the usefulness of the Jews to the government, and royal governments tended to show more flexibility on these matters than ecclesiastical authorities. Under James I of Aragon, for example, the usefulness of Jews as tax collectors, colonists, and agriculturalists caused him to protect their Moorish slaves from the conversion efforts of Christians.¹¹ Lenient policies such as these did not last, however. In Castile, the *Siete Partidas* prohibited the Judaization of non-Christian slaves and later policy generally followed this model.¹²

According to A. C. de C. M. Saunders, Jews "had little difficulty acquiring" Black slaves in late-fifteenth-century Portugal, since little effort was being made by Christian authorities toward the slaves' conversion to Christianity. In Saunders's view, Jewish ownership of pagan African slaves posed little problem, "since for most of the Middle Ages Portuguese law did not encourage slaves

of infidel masters to espouse the Christian religion."¹³ Only in 1514 did King Manoel order that provisions be made to have slaves baptized on board the sailing vessels. The seminal Portuguese law code of 1603, the *Ordenações filipinas*, even allowed slaves to refuse baptism.¹⁴ Documentary sources from Portugal and Spain provide vague confirmation of Saunders's position.

In fifteenth-century Valencia, according to a study of notarial contracts of slave sales, some 89 percent of the slaves being exchanged among Christians were described as Christians or bore "Christian" names, whereas this was true for only 68 percent of those being exchanged among Muslim, Christian, and Jewish sellers or purchasers.¹⁵ In 1487, the *Justicia Civil* of Valencia approved the automatic manumission of a newly baptised Black slave belonging to a Mudejar master by citing the "dispositions of both canon and civil law as well as the *Furs de Valencia*" that "if any Jew, pagan, or heretic should be master and have or possess a Moorish or pagan captive and that black captive, trusting in God, should be baptized or request holy baptism and learn the holy Catholic faith, he immediately shall acquire" full liberty.¹⁶ Renée Levine Melammed asserted that in Jewish homes in preexpulsion Spain, at least, "most household servants were not Jewish."¹⁷ There was a market, in other words, for slaves who had not been Christianized. Rising anti-Jewish sentiment in Portugal forced the liberal policy there to an end. In response to allegations to the Cortes "that generally [people] see in these kingdoms the Jews being masters of many slaves, white as well as from Guinea, which they buy to serve them," a royal decree of 1490 stated that "no Jew may buy male or female Moors from Guinea under penalty of losing them."¹⁸ Evidence from both Jewish and non-Jewish sources shows that slave owning by elite Conversos in Spain and Portugal should not be underestimated, though of course these owners had obtained the privilege as Christians. Based on rabbinic responsa, scholars have concluded that many of those who fled in the wake of 1492 and 1497 "even brought slaves and maidservants with them" to eastern lands.¹⁹

If some elite Jews owned slaves, the total number cannot have been large. Of more significance than numbers was the controversial theo-political nature of Jewish slave ownership. Based on both Jewish and non-Jewish sources, Simḥa Asaf thinks that from the fourteenth century until 1492, slaves were very rarely found in the possession of Jews.²⁰ In medieval Castile, only the wealthy Jews of Toledo owned Moorish slaves, while throughout the peninsula only the courtiers could afford "large estates, slaves and concubines."²¹

Most scholars now tend to minimize Jewish involvement in medieval slave trading.²² But documents exist showing that some Jewish merchants *did* trade in slaves among other merchandise, mostly on a local level. Reflective of these were the Jews in thirteenth-century Mallorca, who had received great benefits for their various services to the Aragonese reconquest, and who occasionally

bought and sold one or two Muslim slaves as minor operators on a very local level. According to one scholar's study of extant commercial transactions involving slaves, Jews conducted a mere 4.3 percent of the sales and 8.4 percent of the purchases; these slaves were bought mainly for personal use.²³ Two published documents from fifteenth-century Tortosa, in Aragon, present what was probably typical of the kinds of interactions Jews had with slaves just before the expulsion. One notarial deed from 1439 has a Jew lending a non-Jewish doctor's widow 30 libras to buy a Saracen maidservant named Axa Negra; the second relates the 1486 sale by a Christian schoolmaster of his maidservant named Catalina through an intermediary, a Jewish sheep broker.²⁴ On at least seven occasions during the 1480s, Jewish retailers in Murviedro, a suburb of the port of Valencia, distributed Black slaves imported through Valencia, along with textiles, metalware, and spices.²⁵ Notarial deeds of Seville pertaining to Jews and Moors in the second half of the fifteenth century, collected and published by Klaus Wagner, mention one "black moor," no Jews owning or trafficking in slaves, and no Black slaves at all.²⁶ A few Jews operated from Portugal's Africa territories as traders of "white Moors," that is, non-Black Muslim slaves.²⁷ On the whole, however, Jewish participation in the trading of slaves remained minimal.

THEORY AND REALITY UNDER ISLAM

In the Ottoman Empire, the practice of slaveholding by *dhimmis*, non-Muslim monotheists, had a complex legal and social history. As Haim Gerber pointed out, the repeated instances of the promulgation of legislation banning slave owning by *dhimmis* shows only how little effect such laws had.²⁸ Often, as well, the authorities failed to enforce these laws or enforced them only for the purposes of extortion.²⁹ Indeed, Jews sometimes even owned Muslims despite the legislation (and despite perhaps even stronger feelings) forbidding this.³⁰ R. Shmuel de Medina (1506–1589; Salonika) fielded a question regarding one Jew who wanted to annul the business arrangement that got him a maidservant, as he had not been told that she was a Muslim Turk.³¹ In Egypt, R. David ibn Zimra (1479–1573; Egypt) treated a query about a Jew who inherited a Muslim maidservant who bore him a daughter.³² In any case, the owning of non-Muslims was legalized in the Turkish sphere by the end of the seventeenth century.³³ What had previously been accomplished through the "legal gyration of having Muslim intermediaries purchase slaves for them" now came through a tax on the slaves.³⁴

Jews "took an active part" in the highly developed Ottoman slave trade.³⁵ A letter from the merchant David dei Rossi of Cesena, Italy, sent home while he journeyed in the Levant, circa 1534, described how in Syrian Tripoli he

saw "a Jewish merchant [who] came from Egypt who had 85 servants and handmaids, all Ethiopians. He carried with him a great deal of sugar, rice, paper and other articles; he sold and exchanged them and continued on his voyage."³⁶ In the seventeenth century, Jews played an important role alongside Muslims and Christians in the Jerusalem merchants' guild, which sold "consumer goods, maidservants, slaves and beasts of burden."³⁷ While restrictions on Jewish slave owning remained operative, the number of slaves in the possession of Jews throughout the Middle Ages and the early modern era also remained low. A survey demanded in 1559 by the sultan, worried about slaves in the hands of Jews and Christians, produced a mere 32 slaves and 51 old freed maidservants belonging to (or living with) the tens of thousands of Jews and Christians in the Ottoman capital.³⁸ A 1612 imperial edict required all slaves of the Jewish and Christian communities who had been manumitted within the previous six years "to secure a new proof from the *sicill* (judicial record)" within three days. An "unprecedented number of manumissions" followed, approximately 60 in all.³⁹ While official numbers of slaves and maidservants belonging to Jews in the Ottoman capital remained low, actual numbers must have been somewhat higher.

In Egypt, most Muslim jurists allowed non-Muslims to acquire and maintain slaves of any religion other than Islam. But growing religious extremism in the fourteenth century led to the promulgation of several restrictive decrees, such that by 1354 dhimmis could not keep Muslim slaves of either sex, any person who had been under the authority of Muslims, or a person who had grown up as a Muslim; they were also forbidden to convert slaves to Judaism or Christianity. Effectively, the slaves of Jews were to be only fellow coreligionists.⁴⁰ Legal prohibitions notwithstanding, dhimmi, including Jews, continued to purchase pagan slaves – especially Ethiopians and other sub-Saharan Blacks – and sometimes even Muslim slaves.⁴¹ A decree of 1573 barred the Jews of Cairo and Alexandria from acquiring Muslim Ethiopian maidservants, showing that they had been doing so.⁴² Between 1587 and 1591, another decree ordained that dhimmi could not hold any kind of slaves. In 1736, Jews and Christians, under threat of a penalty of death, were forbidden to employ Black maidservants.⁴³

J. O. Hunwick's statement, that "[b]y the time the black African slave reached the slave market in North Africa or the Middle East he or she was already a nominal Muslim," seems difficult to reconcile with the tremendous and oft-cited ideological pressures against dhimmi owning Muslim slaves.⁴⁴ An Islamic legal ruling from fifteenth-century North Africa helps resolve the confusion: A slave who converted to Islam only after capture, and not as a free person, might still be sold as a slave; only if a non-Islamic group converted in its homeland to Islam, "freely" and en masse, might it be prohibited to sell individuals from the group as slaves.⁴⁵ Overall, one should be conscious of the instability and

politically convenient flexibility of religious identity on the peripheries of religious empires. For a few elite Jews, then, marginalized and restricted under both Christianity and Islam, pagan slaves constituted an opportunity despite general, hostile, popular feeling toward Jewish slave owning and repeated efforts to limit its reach.

EARLY MODERN TRANSFORMATIONS

Slavery for the most part ended in northern Europe in the medieval era, replaced with serfdom.⁴⁶ The abhorrence of slavery among early modern Protestants (or French and Flemish Catholics) did not, of course, prevent the development of other forms of economic exploitation and socioeconomic othering. Nor did it prevent the reliance on slave labor in the colonies abroad. Indeed, it could be argued that slavery's prohibition at home in the metropole and its centrality in the colonies worked together to create an efficient segregation of classes of labor and laborers. Samuel Freiherr von Pufendorf, counselor to the kings of Sweden and Prussia, expressed this ambivalent equalitarian tendency well in the contradictory titles of two chapters of his compendium on law: "That all Men are to be accounted by Nature Equal" and "Of Despotical Power, or the Authority of the Master over his Servant."⁴⁷ Legal opposition to slavery at home proved consistent, though not unopposed, and eventually found extension even to Blacks and colonial slaves with the growth of rationalism, the French Revolution, and abolition.

Since the holding of slaves entailed a matter of importance to Sephardim for reasons of both labor and status, it came under political negotiation. After their involuntary departure from the Iberian peninsula, elite Sephardic and Converso refugees attempted to ensure that in their new homes they would be permitted to continue in their former lifestyle. The privileges awarded to Sephardic Jews by various principalities and cities, which granted permission to use slaves and servants despite "the universal prohibition . . . against Muslims or Jews owning slaves," clearly reflect the pragmatic interests of the authorities in encouraging the economic potential of these (ex-)Conversos.⁴⁸ According to Renata Segre, in Ferrara "there were no limits placed on the number of people who could be employed by the Sephardic Jews, and slaves were also admitted."⁴⁹ The privileges extended in 1550 to the Portuguese Jewish merchants in France, for example, permitted them to bring in "their wives, children, families, clerks, factors & servants."⁵⁰ The 1551 invitation to Jewish merchants to trade in Florence and other Tuscan locations, extended by Cosimo de Medici I, similarly assured that "you will be well received . . . with all your families, slaves and servants."⁵¹ The 1572 privileges offered to Jews from Spain and Portugal by Emanuel Filibert, Duke of Savoy, modeled explicitly on other earlier privileges, come across as

the most liberal. Article 7 reads: "It is forbidden to bring their slaves to convert [to Christianity], but if such should happen, they will pay to the Jews the full value of the slave to be baptized."⁵² The 1593 invitation by Ferdinand I, Grand Duke of Tuscany, to Jewish merchants to settle in Pisa and Livorno offered, among other privileges, the authorization to own slaves.⁵³ Article 27 declared laconically, "We concede to you that your slaves will not have the right of liberty." According to Renzo Toaff, this formula probably followed negotiations between the Florentine government and the already extant Levantine Jewish community of Pisa, which included many Sephardim who settled there after the expulsion.⁵⁴ The ex-*Conversos* actively negotiated these privileges (and those of later colonial charters), cognizant of past precedents, political contexts, and the like. Menasseh Ben Israel in Amsterdam even possessed copies of some of the just-mentioned Italian charters.⁵⁵

Of course, many of the communities that considered hosting Iberian Jews reiterated the medieval bans on owning Christian slaves or employing Christian servants. In response to the mid-seventeenth-century proddings of Menasseh Ben Israel and others to readmit Jews to England, the Council of State's considerations specifically stated that "[t]hey should not have Christian servants."⁵⁶ Complaints about the Christian servants in Sephardic households were voiced in Hamburg, where recommendation was made to the Senate in 1649 to forbid such employment.⁵⁷ Even some of the invitations by the Italian rulers warned that "you will not keep as slaves those who were born Christians in Christianity." (Such slaves were to be liberated after the owner received their full price.)⁵⁸ But exceptions existed even regarding the employment of Christians. (Ex-)*Conversos* outside of the Iberian peninsula, such as in Ferrara, "on account both of their franchises and of their uncertain status" as possible Christians, possessed "the ability to employ Christian labor."⁵⁹ The 1572 privileges granted by the Duke of Savoy also state that "[i]t is permitted to them to employ Christian servants of either sex, as well as Christian nursemaids for their children, on condition that they will not influence them to turn Jewish."⁶⁰

Not all of the Protestant countries accepting Sephardic Jews forbade the employment of hired Christian servants, ecclesiastical displeasure notwithstanding. The privileges granted to the "Portuguese" Jews in 1630 by the municipality of Glückstadt permitted them to conduct business and trade in the region by means of their (men)servants, just like the town's Christian burghers.⁶¹ Abraham Ydaña, alias Gaspar Médez del Arroyo, who had fled Spain and the Spanish Inquisition for Holland and Judaism, noted in a 1683 letter that "all [of the Amsterdam Sephardim] are served in their houses by Christian maidservants."⁶² It is clear that Jews sometimes employed Christian servants even in contravention of legislation. As late as 1731, a Mantuan ecclesiastical report complained that Jews were illegally employing Christian maidservants.⁶³

For their part, many Sephardim interested in exploring the colonies and their economic possibilities insisted on doing it in "proper" colonial manner. Almost every proposal submitted by Jews to European authorities for the purpose of gaining permission to settle and trade in colonial territories included the possession of slaves as an aspect of the requested privileges.⁶⁴ In the 1650s (that is, shortly after the English conquest of Jamaica), Jacob Josua Bueno Enriques, who claimed to know the site of a formerly Spanish copper mine on the island, petitioned the king not only to allow him to attempt the (re)opening of the mine, but "that I also should have all the freedom and lands that I should desire, and that I should be provided with sufficient blacks [lit., *negras*] to form whatever plantations I may think fit."⁶⁵ The perceived economic usefulness of Jews and the difficulties of attracting "White" settlers to the colonies combined to persuade metropolitan authorities to permit Jews unrestricted ownership of Blacks.

While various Sephardim saw their interest served in the permission to hold slaves, members of their host societies did not always agree, especially those in the clergy. In Amsterdam, ministers and aldermen of the Reformed Church wanted Christian maids to be prohibited from working or living in Jewish households, but they could not gain the approval of municipal authorities. In response, they issued instructions to members "to visit these maids, warn them against the danger to their souls, and exhort them to go and live with Christian families."⁶⁶ Even in the Protestant Americas, where Jews were allowed for reasons of state economic policy to own slaves, such permission to own slaves did not always sit well with Christians. In Dutch Brazil, local Calvinist clergymen complained about Jewish employment of Christian servants.⁶⁷ New Netherlands Governor Peter Stuyvesant complained in a 1661 remonstrance – that is, only shortly after Jews came to the colony – about "the irksomeness of the idea that Christians and employees of the [Dutch West India] Company should not in every case have the preference in the matter of getting slaves arriving in New Amsterdam, over 'Spaniards and unbelieving Jews.'"⁶⁸ In Surinam, in 1777, the Court of Policy issued an order to sell two orphan slaves belonging to a member of the De Meza family at a public auction, but with the stipulation that no Jew be allowed to buy them.⁶⁹ Already in 1669, in response to a petition requesting expansion of earlier privileges, the Surinamese authorities permitted the Jews to have "their Blacks" work on Sundays (see Chapter 9). This privilege did not please the Dutch Reformed clergy, among others, and its revocation was occasionally attempted both directly and indirectly. In March 1771, the *parnasim* of the Portuguese community got wind of a February decree of the Political Court forbidding work to be given to slaves in Paramaribo and along the Suriname River on Sundays. Worried that this act targeted Jews prejudicially, they sent two emissaries to remind the governor and other high officials of their long-standing privileges.⁷⁰

According to Bertram Wallace Korn's article on the slave trade in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, "[s]lave-owning Marranos settling in Protestant countries created serious legal difficulties (as in London and Hamburg)." ⁷¹ He cited the sole example of a Portuguese relative of Albertus Denis or Álvaro Dinis who "was forced to leave Danzig because of public indignation at his treatment and ownership of slaves." ⁷² Ecclesiastical unhappiness over Jewish slave owning notwithstanding, I have found no evidence to buttress Korn's claim beyond the matter of Dinis. ⁷³

It is possible that some Jews of Iberian background desired or even attempted to open a slave market in Amsterdam in the last years of the sixteenth century. The Dutch authorities did not allow this. But no issue was made of the many slaves imported and owned by various Spanish and Portuguese Jews; and the Dutch surely did not lack opportunities to complain or intervene had they so wished. England, as can be seen, officially readmitted Jews under the restriction that they not own Christian servants, but I have seen no legal entanglements stemming from the fact that even afterward, Jews *did* own slaves and employ servants (though of unstated religion). A. S. Diamond wrote that "the Marranos of this [pre-resettlement] period brought their slaves with them to England." ⁷⁴ Further, "[m]any of the Jewish and Marrano families from the early years had domestic servants, male and female, Christian and Jewish, but usually only one, if any, occasionally two, and only a few of the wealthiest in 1695 had four." ⁷⁵ A list of Jews in England, dated by Lucien Wolf to 1660, stated below the column of names: "Most of them have wives and saruents [servants]." ⁷⁶ The original statutes of the London Sephardic congregation stipulated:

No person shall speak of hiring a house, or actually do it, of another Jew without his express permission; and it shall be the same with serving-women or maids, practicing no collusions to that end by causing them to be spoken to by some Goy; and who should do so shall pay as penalty five pounds sterling for the Sedaca. ⁷⁷

The Jewish leadership clearly did not want unnecessary troubles with maidservants communicating potentially troublesome matters to non-Jews. But sources from before and after the official readmission of Jews show that the "Marranos" and Jews living in London possessed slaves and employed servants (though, again, the sources do not specify their religion); not one incident reflecting concomitant problems has come to my attention. No record of "serious legal difficulties" stemming from the owning of slaves in any of the Atlantic Coast communities newly opened to Jews can be found.

In fact, despite occasional protests from clergymen and even rarer restrictive legislation, Jews in the Dutch and English colonies participated in the slave economy as they pleased. The Jewish presence in some of these colonies was significant. Sephardim made up perhaps half of the European population of Recife in

Dutch Brazil, about a third of the European population of Surinam and Curaçao. Although the West India Company (WIC) maintained a strict monopoly on the importing of African slaves, some Jews in Dutch Brazil (roughly 1630–54) worked in critical ancillary roles as "financiers of the sugar industry, as brokers and exporters of sugar, [and] as suppliers of Negro slaves on credit, accepting payment of capital and interest in sugar." ⁷⁸ Arnold Wiznitzer wrote that the Jews "dominated the slave trade" within Brazil, buying up slaves at the West India Company's auctions:

It happened that cash was mostly in the hands of Jews. The buyers who appeared at the auctions were almost always Jews, and because of this lack of competitors they could buy slaves at low prices. On the other hand, there was also no competition in the selling of the slaves to the plantation owners and other buyers, and most of them purchased on credit payable at the next harvest in sugar. Profits up to 300 percent of the purchase value were often realized with high interest rates. ⁷⁹

The extension of credit was provided to the Portuguese and other planters by the Dutch as part of the reconstructive policy of Governor Count Johan Maurits of Nassau. ⁸⁰ José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello gathered the following statistics on Jewish slave purchasing at slave auctions from archival documents: ⁸¹

	% of Total Purchases	No. of Slaves
1637	12	71
1638	24	196
1639	8	80
1640	41	160
1641	38	445
1642	45	126
1643	63	299
1644	46	494

So prominent were Jews in the movement of slaves within the colony that slave auctions never occurred on Jewish holidays or Sabbaths. ⁸² An indication of the significance of buying and selling slaves can be gleaned from the fact that profits made by Jewish merchants on the sale of slaves (among other products) were taxed by the Recife congregation, Zur Israel. ⁸³

A handful of Sephardic Jews in Amsterdam owned sugar plantations in Brazil even before parts were conquered by the Dutch. ⁸⁴ Of 44 Pernambucan plantations abandoned during the Dutch conquest, confiscated by the WIC, and sold off, 6 were sold to 4 Jews. ⁸⁵ Thus, Arnold Wiznitzer wrote, some 6 percent of the *engenhos* belonged to open Jews. ⁸⁶ Even those who did not own

plantations might possess a few slaves. Samuel Velho, a minor merchant who sold goods around the area of Recife and Penedo, claimed "two Blacks with his mark."⁸⁷ This merchant, typical of his colleagues, sold merchandise ranging "from Black slaves to pieces of cloth and spectacles, in addition to lending money at interest."⁸⁸

Many Jews on Barbados owned slaves. Those in Bridgetown who owned higher numbers of slaves were urban-based merchants who needed more aid than an ordinary household, consequently owning more slaves.⁸⁹ Their slaves, like those of their non-Jewish colleagues, worked in the warehouses, shops, and taverns.⁹⁰ A 1680 census of the island revealed that the 54 Jewish households of Bridgetown (13.3 percent of the total) owned 163 slaves (11.3 percent of the town's slaves), while the 351 non-Jewish households (86.7 percent) owned 1,276 slaves (88.7 percent).⁹¹ In St. Michael parish, which includes Bridgetown, a 1729 list of those who paid taxes on slaves shows that 51 Jews reported owning 402 slaves (averaging nearly 7.9 slaves per household), while 129 Christians reported owning 1,723 (for an average of almost 13.4 slaves per household).⁹² A very few Barbadian Sephardim owned and operated plantations. An Act of August in 1688 forbade non-endenized Jews in any of the port towns to possess or employ more than one male Black slave.⁹³ N. Darnell Davis inferred from the language of this act that "the Jews made a good deal of their money by purchasing and hiring out negroes," something the legislators sought to impede.⁹⁴ Despite opposition, the act was repealed in 1706, a sign of the "increasing importance of the Jewish community in the island."⁹⁵ Some Sephardic merchants of the island bought sick slaves, which, if they regained their health, could be sold for great profit.⁹⁶

On Jamaica, Jewish ownership of dependent labor at times came with strings attached, a continuation of policies in Europe. In 1703, the governing body passed an "Act to encourage the Importation of White Men." Article 13 stipulated that "all Jews that are or shall be hereafter Masters or owners of Slaves within this Island, shall supply their deficiencies by their own Nation, or by hired white Christian Men, and not by indebted Christian servants, under the Penalty of Five Hundred Pounds current money of this Island."⁹⁷ Still, records reveal that Jamaican urban slavery differed little between Jews and Christians. According to a 1740 tax list, 15 Jewish households in Port Royal, mostly merchants, owned 136 slaves. Fourteen Jews owned no slaves. Of non-Jewish slave owners, 137 owned 1,273 slaves, while 122 owned none at all. Port Royal Jewish households held an average of 9.0 slaves each, while non-Jewish households held an average of 9.2 each.⁹⁸ Tax lists from Kingston show that in 1745, 156 Jewish households possessed 1,397 slaves, while 32 households owned no slaves (8.9 slaves per Jewish household on average). Six hundred and four non-Jewish households owned 6,111 slaves, while 220 households held no slaves

(10.1 slaves per household on average).⁹⁹ A 1769 Kingston tax list presented 95 Jewish households owning 1,045 slaves, while 102 households owned none (for an average of 11.0 slaves per Jewish household). Five hundred and eighteen non-Jewish households owned 4,602 slaves, while 630 households possessed no slaves (yielding an average of 8.8 slaves per non-Jewish household).¹⁰⁰ In Spanish Town, according to 1772 tax lists, 46 Jewish households held 495 slaves, while 30 Jewish households did not own slaves (for an average of 10.7 slaves per Jewish household). Of non-Jewish households, 297 possessed 4,096 slaves, while 59 households held none (for an average of 13.7 slaves per non-Jewish household).¹⁰¹

A very few Jamaican Jews owned and operated plantations. While in the seventeenth century some dozen or so Jewish plantations operated, already by the early years of the eighteenth century their numbers had dwindled.¹⁰² Still, the journals of the Jamaican House of Assembly reported the reading in 1706, 1728, 1731/2, and 1738/9 of petitions against separate Jewish taxation filed by "the planting Jews," that is, the Jewish planters, who, though not numerated, evidently felt that they made up an identifiable subgroup (briefly discussed in Chapter 10).¹⁰³ According to Holly Snyder, the involvement in planting of the Jewish population in Jamaica was pretty small before the second half of the eighteenth century, "when Jewish merchants began to invest in small 'suburban' plantations as a means of diversifying their economic interests as a hedge against fluctuations in the Atlantic mercantile trade."¹⁰⁴ A handful of Jamaican Jewish merchants participated in the slave trade, some buying sick slaves at low prices for resale.¹⁰⁵

On Curaçao, Jews both owned slaves and traded in them, though far less proportionally than the island's Protestants. The Sephardic settlers of 1659 were given slaves by the WIC.¹⁰⁶ That year, rights were given to buy slaves for the cultivation of lands. Since until 1674 Jews were not allowed to buy healthy slaves for their private use from the WIC, they bought *macarons*, weak or sickly slaves. In 1674, the Jews were also permitted to buy slaves for reexport.¹⁰⁷ The first Sephardic plantations – at least a dozen around 1700 – sprouted along the coast, in an area known as *Joden Quartier* (= Jews' Town). These plantations occupied from 35 to 4,000 hectares, plus many gardens from 1.5 to tens of hectares. At the beginning of the eighteenth century, no fewer than 25 Sephardic plantations and gardens functioned in the environs of the Jewish cemetery, bought or rented from the West India Company.¹⁰⁸ Many Jews possessed a few personal servants, if not slaves. In 1744, of the colony's 2,098 slaves, only 310 belonged to Jewish owners (14.8 percent); a census of slaves from 1765 reported 860 slaves owned by Jews out of a total of 5,534 (15.5 percent).¹⁰⁹ Yet according to Seymour Liebman, of the nearly 500 runaway slaves from Curaçao between 1729 and 1796, 112 belonged to Jews (22.4 percent).¹¹⁰

Jews also participated in the local and regional trading of slaves. Wrote Isaac and Suzanne Emmanuel: One need but scan "the Company archives toward the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries to see the large-scale transactions conducted by the Jews in the purchase of slaves and products sold by the Company."¹¹¹ One Sephardic Jew, Philippe Henríquez or Jahacob Senior, became the only Jew to ever obtain official authorization from the West India Company to bring slaves directly from Africa to Curaçao.¹¹² Jews participated actively in the slave trade with the company in the twenty-five years between 1686 and 1710, buying slightly under a thousand slaves in that period.¹¹³ Many Jews bought from one to nine slaves for their personal use or for eventual resale.¹¹⁴ After this time, the slave trade, both Jewish and general, diminished.

Most of the elite Surinamese Sephardim operated plantations.¹¹⁵ A hundred acres of land were bestowed on the Portuguese community by Governor van Scherpenhuysen "in the name of the Lords of the colony in Holland," in 1691.¹¹⁶ In 1734, it seems, the Society of Surinam granted to the Portuguese Jewish nation 25,000 acres, poor families receiving 250 acres each.¹¹⁷ By the height of Sephardic cultivation of the land in the 1760s, Jews owned some 115 of the colony's 591 plantations.¹¹⁸ When a 1753 entry in the notebook of the *parnasim* referred to "the Gentlemen Planters & principal Members / *SS^{tes} Plantadores & pricipais Jehidim*" of the community and congregation, the linkage of landed wealth and leadership was not coincidental.¹¹⁹

Registers produced for Governor Van Sommelsdijck in 1684 mentioned 105 Jewish men and 58 women owning 543 Black men slaves and 429 Black women slaves, 10 Indian men slaves and 13 Indian women slaves.¹²⁰ By 1690, according to the *Historical Essay on the Colony of Surinam*, the Jews possessed "forty sugar plantations, almost all of them with mills turned by animals, and more than 9,000 black slaves."¹²¹ Despite the plausible number of plantations mentioned in the *Historical Essay*, the number of slaves seems impossibly high. Even if each of the 40 Jewish plantations had 200 slaves – an extremely unlikely scenario – this yields a total of only 8,000 slaves. Further, it was only around 1713 that the colony as a whole claimed 12,000 slaves; Robin Blackburn even wrote that "[b]y 1700 there was a slave population of 8,000 in the colony."¹²² I suspect that the numbers given in the *Historical Essay* mostly reflect the authors' desire to bolster the image of the Jewish community's stature.¹²³

The Jewish plantations' physical layout probably matched that of their Christian neighbors; wrote the authors of the *Historical Essay*, "from the beginning of the colony" Jews had "as large settlements . . . as the Christians."¹²⁴ Wim Hoogbergen stated, without supporting evidence, that the Jews' "plantations were generally small."¹²⁵ Even so, "small" estates in eighteenth-century Surinam might maintain 137 slaves, while "average" estates might maintain 228,¹²⁶

"somewhat larger than those in Jamaica at its height, and more than seventeen times as large as average contemporary plantations in Virginia or Maryland."¹²⁷

Jews participated in the internal slave trade, buying slaves for their plantations.¹²⁸ Jews in Surinam served as plantation managers, as did one Schults at the New Rosenback estate and before that at Fauconberg, another estate. Both of these estates belonged to Christians.¹²⁹ The *Historical Essay* mentioned several plantations "governed, worked, and administered by Jewish managers."¹³⁰

THEORY AND REALITY UNDER JUDAISM

Despite moral exhortation from rabbis against unseemly luxury or hubris, nothing in Jewish law or tradition prohibited the owning of slaves.¹³¹ The enslavement of people from the nations surrounding Israel was sanctioned in Leviticus 25:45–46, and this was generally stretched to include all non-Jews. Almost all rabbis agreed that the laws and practice of maintaining Hebrew slaves held force only in ancient times, when the Temple stood in Jerusalem, the Sanhedrin functioned, and the Israelite population observed the Jubilee year. But differences of opinion reigned in the Sephardic rabbinic world over whether or not the laws regarding non-Jewish ("Canaanite") slaves continued to obtain. Some rabbis held that the laws pertaining to the holding of non-Jewish slaves no longer held force. R. Yosef ibn Lev, head of a *yeshiva* at Salonika and Constantinople, and R. Shmuel de Medina, also of Salonika, made up a few such minds.¹³² Some of these thinkers held this opinion in deference to the theological politics forbidding Jewish slave ownership. Thus, in order to avoid troubles due to holding Muslim maidservants, the Jerusalem Jewish community issued a *takana* (sometime prior to the seventeenth century) absolutely forbidding members to bring any maidservants to the city.¹³³

Other rabbis insisted that the laws relating to Canaanite slaves continued to obtain. The Spanish Ya'akov b. Asher (1270?–1340) reminded readers of this in his monumental legal codification, the *Arba'ah Turim* (= The Four Columns). The section on the laws of slaves opened: "And [the law regarding] the Canaanite slave is practiced at this time."¹³⁴ A later giant of the *halakhic* world, R. Ya'akov Kastro (1525?–1610; Egypt, Palestine), dismissed those who argued otherwise in his own commentary to the section concerning slaves in the *Shulkhan Arukh*: "[T]here are those who wrote that there is no [law regarding] Canaanite slave [in practice] at this time, and their words have not been clarified to the greats of the generation."¹³⁵ In his mid-eighteenth-century responsa, the Amsterdam Sephardic rabbi David b. Rafael Meldola continued to use the category of Canaanite slave (when dealing with a slave in Tsipori in Palestine, but I find it hard to believe that he used the term only because of its geographical aptness).¹³⁶

The import of the debate over the authority of the laws of Canaanite slaves should not be exaggerated. Holding that the laws pertaining to Canaanite slaves no longer functioned was not necessarily the same thing as desiring or ordaining the end of the practice of slavery. An equivalent halakhic model might be the laws pertaining to agriculture, which held force only in the land of Israel. This did not and was not meant to stop Jews from continuing to garden and farm outside the borders of Israel. Jews simply gardened and farmed without the halakhic framework. In the diaspora, both agricultural and slave laws became relegated to a discursive plane reserved for a past/future utopian moment/space of Jewish autochthony, power, and holiness.

A related question involves the precise identity of the non-Jewish slaves permitted to Jews by the Bible. In the medieval world, several of the medieval tosefot biblical commentators raised the issue of the fate of the Canaanites: On the one hand they were cursed into servitude, but on the other hand it was commanded that none of them be left alive (Deut. 20:16). The solution found was "historical," consisting of Joshua's decree that the Giv'onites be made woodcutters and water bearers (Josh. 9:23, 27).¹³⁷ This solution had already been produced in the Talmud (B.T. Yevamot 79a). What this resolution signified for the post-biblical world remains unstated. Yosef ibn Kaspi (1279–1340; Arles, Tarascon, Aragon, Catalonia, Majorca, Egypt, Fez) seemed to offer a limited historical application, writing that Kena'an was to be a slave to "all of the nations, and all the more so to his neighbors Egypt, Aram and Babylonia." He wrote explicitly that the curse did not extend even to the days of Joshua.¹³⁸ In his time, Abravanel pointed out that the slaves discussed in Exodus 21, for instance, were not from the seven Canaanite nations whom the Israelites were commanded to obliterate, but "from the descendants of Ishmael and the descendants of Keturah [Abraham's second wife/concubine] and those of Esau and his concubine and of Lot," who were "descendants of the [alien] residents living among us so that they might receive the seven Noahide commandments."¹³⁹ This statement, fairly unique in Jewish discourse, presented nothing less than a Jewish version of long-standing Christian and Islamic doctrine permitting the enslavement of nonbelievers. Many commentators went out of their way to assert that the "Canaanites" were to serve as slaves even after the destruction of the Temple, the exile of Israel, and the political expansion of Yefet (Rome? Europe?).¹⁴⁰ In this way, the historicity of the Canaanite issue could be overcome and the curse made universal. Rafael Yosef b. Hayyim Hazan (1741–1820; Smyrna, Jerusalem) wrote explicitly in one sermon that "it is known that every non-Jewish Canaanite slave is called a slave even though he is not from Kena'an."¹⁴¹ This can, of course, mean either that the slave did not descend from the Canaanites or that she did not come from the land of Palestine. But the import was clear.

What remained unclear, however, was the line between a non-Jewish and a Jewish slave. If a "Canaanite" slave was circumcised or immersed or converted, did that not make him a Jewish slave? The usual answer was no. According to Rambam, a slave woman, since she has been immersed for enslavement, has left the category "Aramean," that is, a non-Jew with whom sexual relations are forbidden.¹⁴² Nonetheless, she has "not entered the category of Israel."¹⁴³ "Jewishness" did not come automatically, that is, despite the undergoing of some of the required rituals. The uncertainty about the Jewish status of even a slave who had been immersed meant that her lifestyle carried far more legal significance than was true for a full Jew or a non-Jew. Hence, one seventeenth-century rabbi cited Rambam's ruling from elsewhere in the *Mishneh Torah* that a Jew

who had a maidservant and bore a son with her, and treats him like a son, or said 'this is my son and his mother is free,' then this one shall inherit [from the father like a son] on the condition that he observes the Torah. But if he was one of those people who make themselves licentious/lawless/irresponsible, he shall not inherit.¹⁴⁴

R. Ishac Athias made the distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish slaves even clearer: "I call him pagan, according to his nation, but not according to his religion, because it is understood by him that he has been circumcised and immersed, for the sake of servitude."¹⁴⁵ With the introduction of the kind of ethnic vocabulary current in the mid-seventeenth-century Atlantic world, Athias ensured that the halakhic categories remained firm, though presenting a definition bearing two contradictory significances. On the one hand, Athias's statement indicates that religiously such a slave was *not* considered a pagan. On the other hand, even a slave who underwent the first steps toward religious absorption remained a non-Jew by dint of his "nation." There could be no such thing, in other words, as a Jewish slave. Only a slave who gained liberty could attain the status of a Jew.

Some rabbis and other Jews held that "Canaanite" slaves should not be set free, interpreting Leviticus 25:46 ("you shall work them forever / לעולם בדם העבד") as a positive commandment, a view based on opinions attributed in the Babylonian Talmud (tractate Gittin 38b) to R. Judah in the name of Samuel and R. Eliezer. Rambam already stated this opinion, though at the same time allowing the legal provisions for their liberation to stand after the fact (*b-di'aved*).¹⁴⁶ A list of the *mitzvot* preceding the sumptuously illustrated Lisbon Bible of 1482 specified that Canaanite slaves were to be worked forever (*mitzva* no. 343).¹⁴⁷ One of the chief rabbis of Salonika, Yosef ben David (1662–1736), reported that in his time, some Jews thought that freeing non-Jewish slaves meant transgressing this positive command.¹⁴⁸ Several Sephardic rabbis of

seventeenth-century Amsterdam held to this view, including Abraham Pharar or Farrar, Ishac Athias, and Selomoh de Oliveyra.¹⁴⁹ Moshe Hagiz voiced the same opinion.¹⁵⁰ Avraham b. Shmuel Meyuhas (d. 1767; Jerusalem) wrote that the curse that Kena'an be a slave of slaves to his brothers (Gen. 9:25), with the plural specified (Gen. 9:26 and 27), meant that "even if he [a Canaanite slave] escaped his servitude, for instance if his first master despaired of retrieving him after the slave's capture [by pirates, soldiers, etc.], in any case the second master [who purchased him after his ransom] enslaves him forever."¹⁵¹

Jews who wanted or needed domestic help resorted either to Jewish servants or non-Jewish servants or slaves, depending on labor and political conditions inside and outside of the local Jewish community. The convenient help of domestic staff constituted something de rigueur for those who could afford them. A wealthy Amsterdam Jew of unknown name bought some female slaves in 1752 to serve his wife, for whom such a domestic arrangement apparently constituted the norm.¹⁵² A question put to Rabbi Aharon Peraḥya ha-Cohen in 1676 concerned a Jew from the area of Salonika who tried to arrange matters for his daughter from his deathbed: "And he commanded [the witnesses or guardians he appointed] that his eldest daughter marry the son of the scholar P., his relative, with half of his [the dying father's] goods [as a dowry] and that they should buy her a maidservant. And this he said before us over and over."¹⁵³ That this dying man insisted on his daughter's having a maidservant reveals its importance to him, whether for reasons of his daughter's status or well-being (i.e., not having to do all the domestic chores herself [or at all]). Men often hired or bought serving girls when they lost their main female domestic service provider (mother or wife). Young bachelors thus might get themselves a serving girl to do the housework they did not want to do.¹⁵⁴

Women desired additional help no less than men. Ruth Lamdan interpreted the language of one responsum of the sixteenth-century Egyptian rabbi David ibn Zimra to mean that some women who became accustomed to a certain level of living forcefully demanded that maidservants be put under their authority. One woman who wanted a maidservant complained to her husband: "I do not want to carry a bad name in my neighborhood because the needs of the house are not properly taken care of."¹⁵⁵ As a combination of the recurrent desires for domestic help and the external politics in which Jews lived, Jewish communities occasionally promulgated sumptuary laws regarding servants. Altona's Ashkenazic community ordained in 1676 that "no householder may hire for the sake of business more than one manservant. But for the needs of the house he can hire an additional one."¹⁵⁶

Servants and slaves thus populated Jewish households and communities just as they did among other social groups. Just as in Christian and Muslim societies, Jewish discourse produced a literature on handling and treating

servants. For example, such advice made up a section of the *Ma'areh ha-Sorefet* of Moses Chanoch Altschul, the 1577 Hebrew source for the immensely popular and oft-printed Yiddish version, the *Brant Shpigel*, first published in Basle, 1602. These texts, not coincidentally, had women as their target audience; as household administrators, they needed the management training.

The ubiquity of domestic employees also can be gleaned from the frequency with which they appear in spiritual and legal thought as metaphors – attesting to the familiarity and use-value of the figure of the servant/slave. "Yedid Nefesh," one of the most popular Sabbath hymns ever composed, written by the kabbalist R. Eliezer Azikri (1533–1600; Tsfat), entailed an intense emotional love song to God. Its second stanza culminated by analogizing the relationship of the speaker's soul to God to God's gaining of this soul as an eternal maidservant.¹⁵⁷ Another sixteenth-century work, *Olelot Efra'im*, provided an interpretation of three manners of "walking" with God, based on a combination of biblical terminology and contractual issues with a servant. In Elliot Wolfson's paraphrase:

(a) walking behind God, which characterizes the people of Israel after they received the Torah at Sinai, being compared to a servant of a king who is completely trustworthy because he has been tested and signed a contract; (b) walking in front of God, which characterizes Abraham, who was like the servant that was tested but had not yet signed a contract; and (c) walking with, i.e. alongside, God, which characterizes Noah, one of "little faith," who is comparable to the servant who cannot at all be trusted because he has neither been tested nor signed a contract.¹⁵⁸

Jews who could afford to own slaves and employ servants did so, like members of all other elites, for a variety of reasons. But the prime motivation to own slaves for most households consisted of helping the heads of the household avoid menial tasks.¹⁵⁹ The labor-intensive nature of domestic life meant that any household required a constant and endless series of chores. Yet it was clear that an important person did not shop or involve himself with household work, as Yesḥayahu Hurvits, compiler of the monumental *Shnei Luhot ha-Brit* in Palestine in the 1620s, assumed. In this work, he cited the medieval legal codex, the *Tur*, telling Jews that "even if one is an important person and it is not usual for him to buy things at the market or to engage in household work," and that "he has a number of slaves to serve him, it is a *mitzva* to prepare for oneself some thing for Shabbat in order to honor it."¹⁶⁰ Though limited in its aspirations, the thrust of the halakha that Hurvits cited served to undo temporarily – once a week – and partially the spiritually debilitating dependence of the owner on the slave. Labor done by a proxy cannot be devoted to God in one's own name. Attitudes distancing "respectable" people from "menial" work only increased in the European colonies overseas. The 1793 contract between New York's Congregation Shearith Israel and Cantor Gershom Seixas regarding the operation of

the congregational school felt the same principle important enough to stipulate that "no Scholar [i.e., student] be employ'd either in domestic or menial services under any pretence whatever unless it be to make fire for the use of the Scholars while at School."¹⁶¹ At the same time, "proper" women were not meant to engage in such tasks as nursing or rearing children, cooking, and housecleaning.¹⁶²

Beyond their actual functionality, slaves and servants also functioned as symbols of status. For persecuted and frequently enslaved Jews, as Mair Jose Benardete wrote, "Their being slave owners was one of the compensations for their own sad fate of being slaves in turn."¹⁶³ In the early seventeenth century, Sha'ul ha-Levi Morteira or Mortera, rabbi of the Amsterdam Sephardic congregation, sermonized against the inappropriate luxuries appropriated by the Israelites while exiled in Egypt:

Then the verse [Exod. 1:7] says, *va-yirbu*. It was not only that they expanded in their houses quantitatively, but also qualitatively *they became great* and magnificent (as in the phrase *moshi'a va-rab*, "a great deliverer" [Isa. 19:20]). This refers to their manner of dress and to other externals. They began to have expensive clothes and horses and chariots with men running before them, all of which is inappropriate for aliens and exiles in a land not theirs. In addition to increasing envy, it prolongs the exile.¹⁶⁴

That Morteira had in mind the lifestyle of contemporary elite Sephardim in Amsterdam seems obvious.

The practicalities of servitude acquired a further guise of rationalization, as at the hands of another Amsterdam rabbi, who combined in one passage the desire to avoid lowly work with a preference for non-Jewish servants. In his 1649 *Thesoro* to the commandments written (in Spanish) for those wishing to return to Judaism, R. Ishac Athias of Amsterdam concluded his discussion of why Jews use non-Jewish servants by explaining that God

commanded you that pagan servants serve you in perpetuity [cf. Lev. 25:46], in order that your own brothers don't serve you, for they are the children of Israel, all chosen for My service and, as such, it is necessary for them to be free from work [desocupados]. And whoever serves such a Master needs not serve humans.¹⁶⁵

Most urban Jews from "western" Europe, however, probably agreed with R. Leone da Modena in considering "modern" slaves to be more like employees than animate possessions: "Nowadays, when our servants are held by us as comrades and not as slaves, as they were wont to term them in the past, we will not put them to harsh work."¹⁶⁶

The reasons Jews in the Americas depended on slaves is clear. Unlike in the "old world," where slaves and servants may have done the menial chores but not produced the income, here in the colonies the slaves often served to

make the owners' living. So in July 1777, the *Parnasim* claimed that a member of their community could not get to Paramaribo, where he was called for bureaucratic reasons, because of his desperate circumstances: "[H]e did not have . . . slaves in order to get there, as he daily needs to work in order to feed his poor family."¹⁶⁷ Not having slaves meant one had to work oneself. The widespread American recourse to slave labor even among Jews is reflected in the tale, known to us through the doubt-inducing inquisitorial lens, told about ■ Converso who fled to Curaçao to become an open Jew. This strange but typically confused victim of the Spanish Inquisition, a priest of Jewish descent, claimed to have fled Cuba and then Trinidad for Curaçao in 1715 or so. There, "[u]pon his stating that his mother had been a Jewess, a negro servant was given him and he [the priest] was treated to chocolate. The Jews also gave him some books containing Jewish laws."¹⁶⁸

Although it is doubtful that the just-quoted inquisitorially transmitted rumor about Jewish luxuriousness can be trusted, the perception of increased Jewish reliance on slaves in the Americas had a basis in reality. This trend, hardly unique to Jews, will be treated in later chapters. Next, however, in order to better understand the context of this shift, I will examine the social reality of slave life within Jewish communities east of the Atlantic.

Blacks in Jewish Society East of the Atlantic

In this chapter I explore the portrait of Blacks constructed in (mostly) Jewish texts concerned with social "realia" from the European and Mediterranean regions: responsa, notarial deeds, communal ordinances. Responsa are queries addressed to rabbis concerning proper practice, which arose out of the daily life of Jewish communities. I describe them briefly before presenting the body of this chapter. I use the fragmented and minimal extant documentation as a prism with which to evoke: 1) the lives and experiences of slave and free Blacks and mulattos in Jewish communities; 2) the nearly identical lives and experiences of non-Black slaves; and 3) the *halakhic* lives of slaves in Jewish homes and communities. I try to address these matters while keeping in mind Stuart Schwartz's insightful discussion of the tensions between viewing "slavery as a pervasive system" and considering "the actions of slaves, masters, and others in shaping its contours," that is, the tensions between "agency" versus "structure."¹

The limited available evidence indicates that the conditions and obligations of Black slaves or servants in Mediterranean and European Jewish homes differed hardly at all from those of Blacks in non-Jewish homes and cultures. It must be recalled that Blacks comprised only a small subset of the total slave population throughout these regions of mostly domestic slavery, becoming a majority only after the sixteenth century in such places as Portugal and northwest Europe. Throughout the Mediterranean region and northwest Europe, the Black servants and slaves of Jews tended to be women.² But whatever the gender, these slaves seem frequently to have been converted ritually, circumcised and/or immersed, and when manumitted – all according to *halakhic* norms – absorbed in some fashion within the Jewish community. Beginning in seventeenth-century northwestern European countries (the Netherlands, England) and with the move to the Americas, these practices began to recede, as I discuss in Chapters 7, 8, and 10.

I have come across no sources indicating that Black slaves under Jewish ownership served in anything but a domestic function and, less frequently, as commercial appointees in the Muslim eastern Mediterranean. This accords perfectly with the general situation of Black slaves under Muslim and Christian rule. J. O. Hunwick writes that agricultural and industrial employment of Black slaves, especially male, in Muslim Mediterranean regions "is encountered least in the sources."³ Just a small segment of the Blacks in Portugal labored in industrial facilities, such as the ironworks of Lisbon;⁴ Spanish and Portuguese cotton and sugar plantations in the southern peninsula remained few, and only those on the island colonies consumed increasing numbers of slaves with the growth of the industry until the seventeenth century. In northern Europe as well, Blacks served almost exclusively domestic functions. My conclusions regarding the general contours of Jewish slavery in the early modern Mediterranean and in Europe follow those of Simḥa Asaf, who provided the first detailed exploration of the subject.⁵ As will be seen, Jewish slaveholding closely paralleled practices and attitudes in non-Jewish slaveholding, both in the Muslim Mediterranean and in Protestant northwestern Europe. I am not attempting to construct a thorough survey here, however, as much as highlight relevant facets of the topic. Domestic service differed in many respects from place to place and between the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. (Evidence from the eighteenth century appears to be rather more plentiful, a not insignificant factor in helping achieve a nuanced portrait.) In this chapter I focus mainly on the earlier centuries, though sometimes drawing on later examples when they touch on fairly unchanging aspects of domestic service.

The situation and standing of Blacks as individuals in Jewish households differed little, if at all, from that of other non-Jewish servants or slaves.⁶ Such seems to have been the case in fifteenth-century Valencia, where the growing number of Black slaves served in homes alongside slaves and servants of other ethnicities without significant distinction from masters or turbulence from colleagues.⁷ Writing of eighteenth-century England, J. Jean Hecht thought that Black domestics led "much the same life and receiv[ed] much the same treatment as the other members of the domestic staff" and got along harmoniously with colleagues among the White servants.⁸ This is not to argue that Blacks did not receive differentiated treatment from their masters; because of their difference, they often did, both for better and for worse. For example, eighteenth-century Black domestics in Europe often received more petlike and "intimate" treatment from their masters than their White counterparts, who reacted at times with forceful resentment.⁹ Evidence allows one to say that only in Amsterdam, where a comparatively larger number of Blacks and mulattos lived with and in the Jewish community, did a specifically "racial" reaction ensue on the community level (to be discussed here, but mostly in Chapters 7 and 8). The means of

arrival differed for Black slaves, who had usually been forcibly brought in large boatloads directly from Africa, especially in the earlier centuries. Another distinction consisted of the frequent non-Christian status of Blacks, even into the eighteenth century. This seems to have had little impact on their lives in Jewish homes, although of course their paganism made their enslavement tolerable to the authorities and thus more likely from the start.

A VERY BRIEF SOCIOLOGY OF JEWISH LAW

The responsa literature serves as a major source for information on Jews and their slaves east of the Atlantic. The voluminous literature of collections of such responsa – every famous rabbi (and some not so famous rabbis) or his pupils would publish a collection of the queries put to him and his responses – comprise a treasure trove of material for scholars. One can see in them many aspects of the daily social and halakhic life of Jewish communities, as well as the halakhic orientation of rabbinic elites. But they also present hermeneutic dangers. Like all legal records, without additional external sources they provide only the most artificial and curtailed glimpse into living situations. In the process of publication, the queries were made anonymous, often lacking any mention of locale, of dates. The names used in the cases discussed were almost always masked, the Hebrew equivalents of John Doe: Shim'on was in the market one day . . . , Re'uven told his slave to tell his uncle . . . , Levi had a wife whose slave . . . , and so on. Perhaps more significantly, the queries were probably edited; the originals in most cases cannot be found.¹⁰ Mindful of the shortcomings of these historical sources, however, one can put them to great use.

There is, of course, circular reasoning in concluding that queries to rabbis evince halakhic concerns on the part of Jewish laypeople. Still, as will be seen, the mere existence of such a high degree of halakhic consideration on the part of those turning to rabbis contrasts sharply with western Europe and the Americas, where responsa dealing with the practical halakhic issues of slavery are extremely rare. Several factors played a role in the creation of this difference. For one thing, the sociological segmentation of the Jewish and non-Jewish judicial system in the Muslim Mediterranean promoted jurisdiction by rabbis and rabbinic courts not only over the content of legal questions regarding slaves but also the form or methodology in which such questions would be asked and resolved. Although many individual Jews brought their cases before non-Jewish courts, the rabbinic and communal leadership made great efforts to discourage Jews from turning to non-Jewish courts.¹¹ In western Europe and the Americas, not only did individual Jews show themselves more ready to consult the general court system and to internalize its modes of legal reasoning, but the leadership itself also encouraged the abandonment of halakhic fora when it came to

slave-related matters, among others. A responsum of R. Meir b. Shem Tov Melamed (early seventeenth century; Salonika) ruled that one maidservant to whom her master had bequeathed much of his property could not inherit it, as the will had been made in a non-Jewish Egyptian court and was therefore not halakhically valid or binding.¹² I have not seen any statement from a Jewish *posek* (legal decision maker) in western Europe that so discriminated against non-Jewish courts when it came to slaves. Perhaps this is what R. Avraham ben Eliezer ha-Levi of Jerusalem meant when he described how the many important Conversos flocking to Amsterdam "conduct themselves like Christian merchants in matters of business, wills and donations."¹³ Indeed, no *shetar shih'ror* (halakhic deed of manumission) from anywhere in the Americas has come to my attention. This is but one sign, however clear, of the tremendous impact on Jewish slaveholding created by the differences in the surrounding culture of slaveholding.

TWO SLAVES IN JEWISH SICILY

Two documents from Palermo reflect the presence of Black slaves within Jewish households on Sicily. The first document, dated 17 March 1474, that is, before the expulsion of Jews from the territory, constitutes one of the less frequent cases of a male Black slave within a Jewish home and also shows the conflicting religious politics surrounding Jewish slaveholding. The government, at the behest of the local Inquisition, decided to free "Xalonio di Castro Iohanni, Black Jew in the house of Xaguala di Castro Iohanni." The document relates that this Xalonio "had undergone circumcision at the hands of some Jews from the city of Marsala." The master (?) circumcised the slave in accordance with halakhic requirements, although we cannot tell how old the slave was at the time nor, if he had been an adult, how he had reacted. That the document uses for the slave a name belonging to the master, di Castro Iohanni, probably bespeaks a degree of assimilation into the family, though not necessarily voluntary.¹⁴ The government forcibly ended this relationship, removing the slave Xalonio, "that he may do whatever he wills." The document fails to indicate whether this forcible manumission pleased the former slave or whether he continued to interact with the Jewish community.¹⁵

A second, nearly contemporary document reflects other aspects of the era's religious politics: "Marzuca the Jewess, widow of Salomon Bulfarach, resident of Palermo, being moved by the love existing between her and her daughter, wife of Bernardo di Splughis, formerly a Jewess and now a Christian, gives to her a black slave, from the infidel people of Mount Barca."¹⁶ This notarial deed attests to continued close relations between mother and daughter, despite the latter's conversion to Christianity. Indeed, the mother preferred to give the

maidservant to this daughter rather than to a son who remained Jewish. An intriguing stipulation in the gift arrangement is that the maidservant would not have to leave the island, her home. This term probably stemmed from the maidservant herself, and its inclusion in her contract reflects a certain, though limited, element of control that she had managed to negotiate for herself.¹⁷

Although so little can be gleaned from these documents, they focus attention on many central aspects of slaveholding among early modern Jews. Whether or not they knew it, these Jewish masters owned their slaves, like Jewish masters everywhere, amid a complicated network of religious politics regarding the owning of slaves by Jews. Like the Black Jew Xalonio di Castro Iohanni, it appears that many slaves belonging to Jews eventually (were) converted according to *halakha*, the men circumcised and immersed, the women immersed; like all slaves, these two Blacks could not expect their liberation as a matter of course.

The forcible removal of his slave shows that times had changed for the master Xaguala. Jews, as a dependent minority everywhere, received the privilege of owning slaves, if at all, only at the mercy of the ruler. According to Eliahu Ashtor, since some Sicilian Jews participated in the buying and selling of slaves, and the community evidently "considered the right of having slaves as very important [they] consequently obtained confirmation of this right in 1407" from the king, no doubt in response to Church efforts to limit Jewish slaveholding.¹⁸ Yet the same hardening attitudes that were sweeping the Iberian peninsula – Sicily then being controlled by the Crown of Aragon – put an end to the Jewish community's privileges and, in 1492, to its existence. In 1467 a Sicilian decree ordered the cessation of the custom of circumcising slaves.¹⁹

TO CONVERT OR NOT TO CONVERT SLAVES

These two Sicilian documents point up the alternate routes taken by Jews toward the religiosity of their slaves, the multiple practices sanctioned by differing rabbinic authorities. That the Black slave Xalonio di Castro was circumcised followed one pattern of adhering to the traditional halakhic framework. Marzuca's Black slave was bequeathed to her daughter, her religious status unstated. No means exists to calculate the percentage of slaves or servants who (were) converted to Judaism. Certainly responsa alone cannot be taken to reflect any kind of statistics. Early modern Jews did not automatically convert their slaves immediately upon acquisition. Already in the writing of Rambam/Maimonides it was assumed that conversion occurred with the slave's manumission, rather than with his or her purchase, and sociologically this seems to have become common. R. David ibn Zimra, despite earlier complaints, stated that the Egyptian Jews *did* immerse their slaves, both for the sake of enslavement and for the sake of conversion.²⁰

Slaves were to be converted, above all, because it was believed that Judaism would be better for them. Nearly all of the earliest Rabbinic sources reflect the understanding that the implicit trajectory of non-Jewish slaves was toward conversion to Judaism.²¹ Although not all might have expressed it so baldly, few would have disagreed with the evaluation of Yosef b. Avraham Hayyun, leader of the Lisbon community in the late fifteenth century: "[T]he Torah is uppermost of all the natural and ethical wisdoms and these have no relation with her [Torah] for she was given from heaven from Him, may He be blessed, and the rest are arranged by humans."²² According to a majority opinion expressed in the Babylonian Talmud, even a Canaanite slave is considered "a brother to [a fellow Jew] in the commandments / אחיו הוא במצות."²³ A more mundane reason for the conversion of servants, or at least for having them accept the minimum of commandments, derived from the important need for the slave to be ritually acceptable for the preparation of kosher food and drink.

The Bible is clear on the need to circumcise male slaves. This need first found expression in Genesis 17:12–13: "And throughout the generations, every male among you shall be circumcised at the age of eight days. As for the homeborn slave and the one bought from an outsider who is not of your offspring, they must be circumcised, homeborn and purchased alike." Circumcision constituted one of the requirements for the slave's entering, even in the most minimal sense, the cultural and ritual life of his host Jewish community. Discussing who may and may not eat of the Passover sacrifice, Exodus 12:43–44 states: "The Lord said to Moses and Aaron: This is the law of the passover offering: No foreigner shall eat of it. But any slave a man has bought may eat of it once he has been circumcised."²⁴ The Babylonian Talmud already provides the blessings to be said at the circumcision of a slave and discusses whether a slave may be circumcised against his will.²⁵

Over the course of time, *halakha* made allowances in order not to place additional obstacles on Jews who wished to earn a living through the trading of slaves. Various opinions were offered without firm resolution as to whether or not a Jew might possess an uncircumcised slave. Rabbi Yishmael (first century C.E.; Palestine) held, with the anonymous collective of rabbis (ר'ר), that it is allowed, while R. Akiva (first century C.E.; Palestine) forbade possession of an uncircumcised slave. R. Yehoshua b. Levi (second century C.E.) held that "one who buys a slave from the non-Jewish nations and the slave does not want to be circumcised, the master keeps him up to twelve months [lest he desires to be circumcised]; he does not choose to be circumcised, the master goes and sells him to non-Jews."²⁶ The views of R. Akiva and R. Yehoshua b. Levi were harmonized by the fourth-century R. Papa: In cases where a newly bought slave refused outright to be circumcised or where a condition of the sale to the Jewish owner entailed a prohibition on his circumcision, the

master could possess the slave for up to twelve months (R. Yehoshua b. Levi), whereas if the slave agreed to be circumcised but continued to postpone the act from day to day, the master was to get rid of him immediately (R. Akiva).²⁷ A ninth-century responsum from one of the Babylonian *geonim* (= heads of an academy) reiterated this liberalization, permitting Jewish slave merchants to resell slaves who had not taken on performance of the *mitzvot* to non-Jews.²⁸ Later halakha thus developed two main paths, one harmonizing the opinions of R. Yehoshua b. Levi and of R. Akiva to arrive at permission to possess an uncircumcised slave for at most twelve months, the other following R. Yishmael, permitting absolutely the possession of an uncircumcised slave for any amount of time. Until the time of Rabbi Yitshak Alfasi (1013–1103; present-day Algeria, Fez), considered the terminating cusp of the *geonic* era, however, all practical rulings stipulated the twelve-month limit. The Babylonian Rabbi Hai b. Sherira (939–1038) wrote that Jews who lived in places where they feared “lest their slaves should reveal secrets and turn informers” abstained from converting them. He agreed, ruling that such slaves must not be kept.²⁹ Social and halakhic norms, that is, ordinarily pressured toward conversion.

With R. Alfasi, Rambam, and other medieval thinkers, the possession of uncircumcised slaves became permissible, even though many of these thinkers also continued to voice the majority view that uncircumcised slaves cannot be held for more than a year. The first law in Rambam's summation of the laws of circumcision stated the issue unambiguously: “And it is a commandment for the father to circumcise his son and for the master to circumcise his slaves [whether] born in the house or purchased with money.”³⁰ Infant slaves were to be circumcised whether they were born within the property rights of a Jew (*yelid bayit*) or brought in from a non-Jewish sphere.³¹ So critical was this *mitzva* that should a father or master fail to perform it, a rabbinical court was commanded to do so, as one “must not allow an uncircumcised male, neither among Israelites nor among their slaves.”³² Should an adult slave, purchased from a non-Jew, refuse circumcision outright, the Jewish master could retain him for only twelve months before selling him again to a non-Jew.³³ In his own seminal four-part code of Jewish law, the *Arba'a Turim* (= The Four Columns), the Spanish R. Ya'akov b. Asher (1270?–1340) held, like Rambam, on the need to circumcise slaves, paraphrasing closely the latter's language.³⁴ R. Yosef Karo (1488–1575; Balkans, Palestine), compiler of a new summation of Jewish law that quickly outstripped its predecessors, the *Shulkhan Arukh* (= The Set Table, first edition 1564/5), laid out the same law in language copied nearly verbatim from the *Arba'a Turim*, Karo's major source and model.³⁵

Whether practice followed law in this matter cannot be easily resolved. Continuing complaints and legislation from Christian authorities indicate that at least some Jews did circumcize their slaves. Solomon Grayzel interpreted the

medieval halakhic debates about the circumcision of slaves to mean that “the conversion of pagan slaves [by Jews] was a none too frequent occurrence” in thirteenth-century Christendom, despite the fact that Pope Gregory IX complained in 1233 about it.³⁶ Jews in fourteenth-century Castile and Aragon probably circumcised their slaves, as legislation passed in 1380 in Castile and somewhat earlier in Aragon banned the circumcision of non-Christian (Muslim and Tartar) slaves.³⁷ Israel Abrahams found the performance of the circumcision of slaves more widespread in the sixteenth century than in the tenth, at least partially a result of Ottoman religious tolerance.³⁸ Numerous responsa from the early modern eastern Mediterranean show that many Jews cared enough about the halakhic proprieties of circumcision to ask a rabbi for clarification.³⁹

Circumcision constituted but one of the two prerequisites for slaves of Jews. According to early halakha, both male and female slaves who were purchased needed to be ritually immersed for the sake of slavery.⁴⁰ R. Ya'akov b. Asher stated that one who bought a slave from a non-Jew did not come into possession until the slave was immersed for the sake of slavery.⁴¹ R. Yosef Karo quoted the former's statement to the same effect.⁴² On manumission, slaves required a second ritual immersion for the sake of full conversion. I suspect that this second immersion was introduced in order to establish a ritual ensuring the distinction between fully Jewish free persons and slaves, who had only been immersed and/or circumcised for the sake of slavery alone. Immersion for the sake of slavery introduced one to a liminal quasi-Jewish status, neither in nor out: “Even though they [slaves] have been immersed for enslavement and have accepted the commandments which slaves must observe, they have left the category of star worshippers [i.e., idolators, i.e., non-Jews] but have not entered the category of Israel, and therefore a maidservant is forbidden to [have sexual relations with or marry] a free Jew.”⁴³ It is difficult to generalize about whether or not slaves were actually immersed. Simḥa Asaf cited a medieval Spanish text whose author wrote that in his time “they used to keep the Ishmaelite [maidservants] a long time without immersion.”⁴⁴ R. David ibn Zimra wrote that the Egyptian Jews of his day immersed their maidservants both for enslavement and manumission.⁴⁵ In a responsum of R. Hayyim Moshe b. Shlomo Amarillo (eighteenth century; Salonika) dealing with the laws of deeds of manumission, he presented the order for the ritual immersion of converts, presumably used for manumitted slaves.⁴⁶ Insofar as Jewish *poskim* (plural of posek) opted for ritual and religious inclusion of slaves, they acted on the same impulses leading most Muslim and Christian authorities to insist similarly. Where a small slave class posed no particular threat to the host society, ritual and religious inclusion of individuals helped ensure religious and social uniformity.⁴⁷

While certain pressures led toward conversion, however, countervailing pressures pushed in other ways. Obviously, the many external pressures against the

"judaizing" of slaves played no small role in this. Even without overt prohibition, however, Jewish authorities clearly internalized the relevant significance of the precarious Jewish minority status and the importance of not offending prevailing sentiments. Ritual factors peculiar to Jewish law also encouraged the noninclusion of slaves from a religious perspective. Many Jewish households maintained a non-Jewish servant who could perform tasks on Sabbaths that were forbidden to Jews.⁴⁸ One sixteenth-century rabbi answered a query concerning a maidservant who had been immersed and converted by her master's wife without his knowledge; he evidently either preferred her unconverted or failed to get around to doing it himself.⁴⁹ A query addressed to R. Yehudah Ayas (d. 1760; Algiers) about this very issue seems to indicate that "non-Jewish slaves in Jewish homes who do certain things for their masters on Shabbat" were not uncommon.⁵⁰ It appears obvious from some cases that the slaves or servants under discussion had not been converted to Judaism and had not been informed by their masters of the pertinent aspects of Jewish law. R. Yitshak Yosef ha-Cohen (dates unknown) responded to a question about a maidservant who in the course of preparing for herself a bath of grape juice, contaminated her master's wine by touching it, something a non-Jew is forbidden to do.⁵¹

Some masters may have been reluctant to circumcise or convert slaves because of the added competition they posed to legitimate offspring in terms of inheritance. Actual halakhic uncertainties probably also played a role. Given the complexities of halakha, some Jews may not have gone to the trouble. From the earliest post-biblical times, it seems, many Jews and Jewish communities failed to observe halakha pertaining to slaves. Reviewing Jewish manumission of slaves in the Hellenized north shore of the Black Sea during the first three centuries of the common era, E. Leigh Gibson concluded that "biblical precepts on slaveholding were not implemented, even if they were still admired." Indeed, these Jews "incorporated Greek manumission practices into their communal life."⁵² According to A. Büchler, in second-century C.E. Tzipori, a Palestinian center of Rabbinism, norms forbidding sexual relations with gentile slaves seem to have been generally disregarded.⁵³ Simḥa Asaf asserted that "Jewish law protects them [slaves] from the severance of limbs and forbids castration, standard occurrences among other nations, and Jewish ethics commands a humane and merciful relation to slaves," although he had already cited the fact that some Jews simply had non-Jews perform the castration of male slaves for them in places like medieval Iberia.⁵⁴ The prominent seventeenth-century rabbi of Salonika, Shmuel de Medina, complained that the slaves and maidservants bought by Jews often ended up converting and marrying Jews, without anyone bothering to check whether they had been manumitted properly or at all.⁵⁵ But beyond sheer popular evasion of halakha, many rabbis themselves ruled in a fashion

lenient enough to effectively remove halakha from the realm of slave owning. Chapter 7 explores the process by which this minority opinion and practice came to predominate by the seventeenth century.

Xaguala the Sicilian master represents, then, those Jews who concerned themselves with halakhic correctness, who believed that Jewish law covered the owning of slaves and should be observed. Differences of opinion reigned in the Sephardic rabbinic world over whether or not the laws regarding non-Jewish slaves continued to be in force, as discussed in Chapter 2. Despite these efforts, other rabbis insisted that the laws relating to non-Jewish ("Canaanite") slaves continued to obtain. Jews who followed the rabbis who held that the laws regarding Canaanite slaves need no longer be observed might well have argued that slaves need not be circumcised or converted. The Sicilian master Xaguala was not among them.

MANUMISSION

The Black woman in fifteenth-century Sicily who found herself bequeathed to her mistress's daughter faced the problem endemic to being trapped in slavery. Manumission was not something a slave could necessarily expect; the desire to maintain a slave class made the voluntary nature of manumitting slaves a ubiquitous feature.⁵⁶ The majority of manumissions by Jews of which we have evidence came in the masters' last will and testament. As Ruth Pike insightfully commented: "Manumission by will had advantages, for the master retained the services of the slaves as long as he needed them; the prospect of freedom encouraged good conduct on the part of the slave; and the slaveholder could depart this life with a freer conscience."⁵⁷ Manumissions during the lifetime of the master of course occurred, but their rarity is proven by the manner in which they are described in the sources. Of one eighteenth-century rabbi of Constantinople who had bought a maidservant from among war captives, we read, "and after a time his spirit moved him . . . and he liberated her before [a Jewish] court according to Jewish law and practice."⁵⁸ The spirit moving him (נִדְּבָה רוּחוֹ), though idiomatic, alludes ultimately to Exodus 35:21 and the voluntary donation of goods for the new tabernacle, implying that the liberation of his maidservant constituted not only an act of piety but of rarity.

Manumissions were not always voluntarily bestowed by the master even at death. Amsterdam scholar David b. Rafael Meldola answered a question in 1767 about Reuven, a Jew living in the Palestinian town of Tzipori, who possessed a non-Jewish maidservant. Already in her old age, she "beseeched her master to free her with a deed of manumission because she wanted to become Jewish."⁵⁹ Yielding to her supplications, but unable to free her for reasons that remain

unclear, he decided to give her as a gift to Shimon, a friend in nearby Tiberias. Holding to the strict interpretation that to free a non-Jewish (i.e., Canaanite) slave was to violate the positive commandment "to work them forever," this friend managed to change the owner's mind, so that "he cancels the term he mentioned at first, to free her." All of these communications about the maidservant's fate took place while she was en route to Shimon in Tiberias – as if to thematize her powerlessness; the maidservant now found herself in the possession of Shimon, who had no intention of releasing her from her bondage.⁶⁰

The accumulation of anecdotes about manumissions and failures to manumit leads nowhere, statistically. There is simply no evidence that Jews freed their slaves more or less readily or generously than did non-Jews.⁶¹ Ovadia Salama, writing about Ottoman Jerusalem, stated that "the liberation of slaves [was] considered a religious obligation within all of the communities, and in general it is so as well in the Christian community."⁶² He proceeded to give some wonderful examples, from the 1570s through the 1860s, of Greek Orthodox monks freeing slaves immediately after purchase and "for the sake of heaven." One Spanish traveler noted slightly before 1555 that in Valladolid, then capital of Castile, slaves were often given their liberty in their masters' wills.⁶³

Some manumissions came only conditionally. One maidservant had to serve her master's wife until her death, at which point she would go free, a common feature of wills, Jewish and non-Jewish.⁶⁴ A servant or slave of a particularly generous master might receive maintenance monies on his death, more rarely even before this last opportunity. The Amsterdam merchant jeweler Manuel Levy Duarte, a "shrewd and cautious" investor, bought annuities not only for himself but for "his wife's niece and housekeeper, Gracia Alvares, to whom he bequeathed the annuity."⁶⁵ As Edgar Roy Samuel points out, such gifts were "to provide a female relation with a regular income for the rest of her life." It seems clear, however, from the responsa literature that many Jews worried about getting the halakhic procedure of manumission right, especially in the eastern Mediterranean.⁶⁶

THE TIES THAT BIND: MASTERS, SLAVE WOMEN, SEX, AND DOMESTIC ACCULTURATION

R. Yehiel b. Azriel Trabot of Ascoli (d. 1591; Italy) dealt with the case of a Black maidservant – unnamed and from an unstated locale – who had regularly gone to the *mikve*, the ritual bath, not for the purpose of conversion but "for ritual purity after menstruation so that she could have proper sexual relations with her Jewish owner."⁶⁷ We do not know whether it was this technically non-Jewish

maidservant or her master who insisted that she ritually purify herself for sex that was illicit according to halakha. But one or both of them cared enough about the issue of potential impurity to engage in the hypercorrective behavior of resorting to halakhic procedure in a situation where such behavior constituted something arguably incorrect. (Instead she should have been freed and converted, for instance, or abstained from sex with her master.) R. Yehiel, more legally punctilious than the couple, ruled that the child they had together belonged only to the maidservant, that is, was a non-Jew born into the slave status of his mother.

As the master, if not the servant, should have known, their sexual relationship constituted a strongly forbidden matter. Sex with gentiles was forbidden to Jews by both traditional Jewish law and reigning secular law in the Christian world. Maidservants were also off-limits to their masters according to halakha.⁶⁸ Sex with gentile maidservants thus stood doubly prohibited by halakha.⁶⁹ It could also incur great social danger. Visiting Amsterdam in 1777–78, Rabbi Ha'im Yosef David Azulai reported hearing "about a Jewish boy who had seduced a gentile maidservant and whose father then asked [a local rabbi] whether he should send him away [for fear of vengeance from the gentiles]; and he had replied that there was no need, for he was just a boy. But after a while they got hold of the boy and burnt him."⁷⁰ Sex with maidservants also generated strong passions within the Jewish community. R. Hayyim Hrishenti (before 1555–1647; Salonika) responded to a query concerning

Reuven [who] bought a maidservant from Shim'on . . . and his intention was to have sex with her[;] word is now spread that he sleeps with her every moment he desires, and who will tell him what he can or cannot do, for she is his property, and a few God-fearing people . . . rebuked him, and some toughs dared open their mouths to the rebukers, [saying] "why did they come to beat Reuven in his house, for such is a transgression, she is the purchase of his money" . . . and every man who has a maidservant says "I will do likewise."⁷¹

Those who believed maidservants were "available" sexually were not few. In the late sixteenth century, R. Shlomo b. Avraham ha-Cohen (Greece) treated the case of a master who argued that since his maidservant stood as his bought property he could do with her as he pleased, including sexually.⁷² Ha-Cohen argued that the master did not transgress any commandment by not freeing her before having sex with her, as he did not know about the ban on sex with maidservants. In the same century, R. David ibn Zimra wrote that "in my times I have seen several Jews who knew Torah err, thinking that it is permissible to have sex with a maidservant, saying that her purchase price serves as her betrothal money, and how much more [common this view is in] one who does not know the laws of Israel."⁷³ Despite this, Ruth Lamdan stated that

women in sixteenth-century Egypt, where sexual affairs with slaves seem to have been not uncommon, did not express any suspicion of the framework of relations between the husband/master and the maidservant.⁷⁴ Indeed, the Jewish Egyptian scholar Yosef ben Yitzhak Sambari, writing in the 1670s, related that the Egyptian Jews earlier in his century were castigated for the fact that, among other sins, the wives would sleep with their slaves in the absence of their husbands.⁷⁵

Notarial deeds from Amsterdam show the sexual advantage given to masters over the young women in their employ because of their position of power, and the sexual advantage taken by some of them when given the opportunity. Thirteen such cases can be found in the published notarial records from 1600 through 1623, representing, of course, only those incidents troublesome enough (usually because of pregnancy) to come to the attention of the authorities (and us).⁷⁶ It is interesting to note that not a single such incident from the 1590s through 1639 involved a Black or mulatto woman, although we know from the existence of Jewish mulattos in Amsterdam that some Jewish men were having sex with some Black (slave) women. The absence of mention or complaint from Blacks may reflect the lack of recourse to which these doubly foreign women had access in Amsterdam. For instance, most of the cases brought before a notary evince at least one family member of the accusing woman.⁷⁷ Black slaves presumably lacked such local aid despite exceptional cases, such as a Black maidservant in Amsterdam who cultivated two Portuguese Jews as aids in her struggle to claim the back pay owed her by her mistress (discussed later in this chapter).

That many of the cases brought to the attention of various rabbis treat sexual relations between masters and maidservants should not be a surprise. Rabbinic responsa only treat cases with halakhic ramifications, and when children resulted from such unions, the question of their status complicated issues of marriage and inheritance. This is the reason these cases recurred, not, ironically, because of the sexual violence involved (at least from our perspective) and the obvious yet never discussed halakhic issue that such unions were prohibited to begin with.

These cases involved maidservants of all backgrounds. Nevertheless, in some places, the perception obtained that Black maidservants posed more of a danger along these lines than others. The sixteenth-century Egyptian R. David ibn Zimra, for instance, wrote that "my eyes have seen several times that these Ethiopian maidservants are steeped in licentiousness and cannot abide being without sex, and they become pregnant and boast about it and bind their masters."⁷⁸ The licentiousness came, of course, more from above than from below; slaves were hardly in a position to resist.⁷⁹ From the maidservant's point of view, bearing the master's affections and even children probably seemed a

useful strategy for self-preservation, if not upward mobility out of the slave market.⁸⁰

Perhaps more intriguing in the case of the master and maidservant couple discussed by R. Yehiel of Trabot is the ritual observance they practiced. That this Black slave woman went to the mikve implies a certain knowledge on her part of the purpose of her visits there and participation in certain aspects of the communal ritual life. Her behavior suggests the manner in which so many slaves lived on the cusp of halakha. This situation was true especially for women, who so often worked in their owners' kitchen. A master stylist of a later era described the fundamental nature of this nexus as it unfolded in the home of her childhood:

The kitchen was the temple in which Mother was priest and Maggie Doyle [the Irish maid], Levite. When Maggie first came to us to do general housework, Mother explained to her the custom regarding diet and the use of kitchen utensils. Not only was there a gulf between animal food, including all that had its origin in flesh, milk, and its derivatives, but the distinction also applied to the utensils with which they came in contact. No butter must touch meat of any kind nor be served at table when meat was a course; no meat pot must know the contact of milk. The distinction held to the least knife and teaspoon.⁸¹

As the slave was mostly enclosed in her household's private domain, her religiosity remained dependent on the knowledge or ignorance, spirituality or indifference, of her owner. The cases raised in responsa reflect only those brought to the attention of "official" communal authorities. Indeed, this Black slave woman's punctiliousness in attending the mikve appears to have been rather rare. Rabbi David ibn Zimra of Egypt wrote that "because of shame or fear [maidservants] do not ritually immerse" after their menstruation.⁸²

Some slaves and servants clearly participated in the Judaism of their masters to differing degrees. The praise heaped on one maidservant named Maro by her dying master attests that some slaves took on their new spiritual functions as fully as possible:

We the witnesses entered to visit the scholar . . . and he said to us, "Please be witnesses to my will. I hereby acknowledge before you and am commanded on account of death that my adult maidservant Maro served me faithfully and wholeheartedly all her years with me and I also saw in her signs of being kosher [*sic*], for she wants to convert and she was zealous and punctilious in the few commandments she was permitted to maintain."⁸³

Even those servants with more minimal intentions entered the particularities of Jewish life. Sometimes this might mean a merely functional relationship. One eighteenth-century rabbi from Salonika was asked about a Jew who needed

to rid himself of leavened foodstuff for Passover, when it stood forbidden, and the only non-Jew he could find to whom to sell or give it turned out to be the non-Jewish woman slave of his Jewish friend.⁸⁴ Slaves and/or servants participated in public communal functions that did not necessitate a high degree of ritual knowledge or acceptance. The Mahamad of the Amsterdam Sephardic community resolved in 1690 that "neither members of the community, their children nor their servants were allowed to appear in the streets during Purim, as was customary, in costumes or masks, 'since some of our enemies use this [custom of] masquerading to demonstrate their ill intent toward us.'"⁸⁵ Often the relationship of the slave to halakha pertained not to intentions but merely to the slave's ritual status within the halakhic grid. R. Moshe b. Ya'akov Madjar (dates unknown) handled a question about whether slaves can contract ritual impurity from carcasses.⁸⁶ The timing required by Jewish law might determine scheduling for a maidservant's wedding. According to the laws of concubines, under which maidservants often fell for halakhic consideration, she needed to wait at least three months after gaining her liberty to marry, in order to establish accurate legal distinction between children conceived in her old status of slave and those born in her new status as a free Jewess.⁸⁷

In the household as well, both male and female servants often learned enough about *kashrut* to maintain or serve in a Jewish kitchen. A 1741 question answered by the physician Aharon Ledesma mentions an incident in which a serving woman mistakenly prepared meat before its blood had been allowed to drip out, as required by Jewish law. The language of the question makes it clear that this serving woman understood the procedures involved in preparing kosher meat (she could have been a Jewish servant, of course). Her error in this case was merely that she had mistaken rainwater on the meat for the juices that ordinarily dampened the meat's surface.⁸⁸

Although servants might know the technicalities of halakhic living pertinent to the areas of their service, this does not mean they shared the punctiliousness of their mistresses. In 1752, the young scholar Moshe Alvarez responded to a question about a Jewish cook who "slaughtered many animals in the slaughterhouse and one was found to be unkosher. And he announced to his servants that this animal is *treyf*... but the servants forgot what their master had told them and took all the animals to the place where they sell the meat in stores." When the cook returned and discovered the gaff, the servants told him they now had no idea which was the offending piece of meat. Luckily, the Rabbi ruled that the mistake bore no negative consequences; the unidentifiable piece of meat prevented the deed from being undone.⁸⁹ Six years later, another (Amsterdam?) servant made a similar mistake, leading to another responsum. In this case, the master's order to his serving woman seems to have included an explanation of (or at least a statement of) the halakhic issue at stake.⁹⁰

INTO THE COMMUNITY

A number of rabbinic responsa indicate that Black maidservants, like non-Black maidservants, often sought entry to their new host communities and often managed to achieve such in both halakhic and solely de facto manner. These individual trajectories cannot be significantly distinguished from those of slaves in non-Jewish households. These responsa reveal as well the differing layers of social practice and religious understanding involved in such cases.

A woman named Doña Paloma owned a Black maidservant named Simḥa (= happiness), whom she had given to her daughter, Dina. Simḥa had been imported by Doña Paloma's brother to Portugal, whence the family had moved to Ferrara some thirty years before, that is, around 1553. The brother gave her to his mother, who passed her on to Paloma. Doña Paloma testified in 1583 before a rabbinic court in Ferrara, Italy, about the serving woman. When the daughter married,

she went to the bathing house and also this the said maidservant Simḥa who wanted to go bathe in order to be a Jewess [went]. We [the rabbinic court] asked [Dina's mother Paloma] whether she [the maidservant Simḥa] had accepted the commandments of the Jews in front of 3 Jewish witnesses and [Doña Paloma] answered that she had not accepted anything in front of anyone. We asked her if the mistress, the said Dina had been present when [Simḥa] bathed and she answered that she had not been but that she knew that [Simḥa] desired to bathe and she also said that [Simḥa] was punctilious about Jewish practice and observed the Sabbath.⁹¹

One cannot discount the possibility that the mother of the mistress exaggerated the serving woman's Jewish loyalties in order to remove blame from her daughter and herself for the improper manner of her ritual immersion and the fact that she had been living since then as if she were Jewish. The family members, of Converso background, very possibly did not understand the correct sequence of ritual procedures and their significance. For example, there is no mention of a previous immersion, which would have been for the sake of slavery, to make this (second) immersion one for the sake of conversion, just as there is no mention of the maidservant Simḥa's having been manumitted, as would also have been necessary to make her a full Jew.

Not content, the rabbinic court interviewed another old woman, Doña Confrada, asking her if she remembered the events:

[S]he answered that she remembers that she [the maidservant] came to the bathing house with the daughter of her mistress and bathed before her [Doña Confrada's] eyes properly and correctly in order to become Jewish. We asked her if she knew whether [Simḥa] had accepted the commandments before 3 people and she answered that she had not seen that she had accepted anything... We asked her how

many times she went to the bathing house and she answered, that one time only she went down to bathe.⁹²

This Spanish woman, who might have been the bathing house attendant or a family friend, defended the maidservant Simḥa's immersion in the face of halakhic requirements for three witnesses, as she had served as the only witness. (Doña Confrada's stance also hints at contestation, possibly gendered, between varying social layers of authority.) Some time later, Simḥa bore a child to a Sephardic Jew also living in Ferrara, who had the boy circumcised.⁹³ Perhaps Simḥa had lied about her status or simply misunderstood it. One sees throughout this case the disjunction between halakhic requirements and the actual practice of those involved, with the latter consistently erring on the side of inclusion. Rabbi Avraham de Boton, on the other hand, ruled that Simḥa could not be considered a Jewess.⁹⁴ Finally, it should be noted that nowhere here do we have the voice of Simḥa herself, so that her mistress's assertions about her desires to enter the Jewish community cannot be taken for granted.

In a case ruled upon by R. Shmuel Aboab (1610–1694), we see similar trajectories. The letter addressed to him set out the situation:

Reuven bought a Kushite maidservant from an official who had bought her from the master of a *dogia* [a kind of ship] which had plundered a boat of Arab merchants – figs, dates and other things, and Black men and women, going to market as is their wont. From the day of her setting foot on land, time did not but bring them pleasure and benefit and this maidservant rose in value when she bore him a son,⁹⁵ but she never immersed, neither she nor her son, any kind of immersion, not even for the sake of slavery. After Reuven's death his heirs inherited her and her son. May the teacher teach us [what needs to be done] when she converts in order to enter the tradition of the covenant of a Jewess.⁹⁶

The details of the query concerned what exact ritual procedure this maidservant would need when she converted, but in any case the intention of the heirs not only to free her but to have her turn Jewish comes across clearly. One assumes that this implied as well her desire to become Jewish. No doubt the intentions of the heirs derived from the special relationship she shared with their father. Although here the heirs concerned themselves with following halakhic requirements, the maidservant's owner and lover had not.

These two Black women fold into the not-insignificant number of slaves and servants who remained attached in one way or another to the Jewish community.⁹⁷ Appreciated slaves were provided for.⁹⁸ Many former maidservants married into the community.⁹⁹ In a 1721 case treated by Rabbi Hayyim Moshe b. Shlomo Amarillo (1695–1748; Salonika, Constantinople), a maidservant belonging to two Jewish brothers had a daughter (of unstated paternity),

who years later was immersed and converted by the new Jewish owners who had inherited her mother, and married off to a (free) Jewish man. One gentile maidservant who had been born in Salonika or its environs into the Jewish home of three business partners was immersed for conversion while still a girl, then married off to a Jewish man after four or five years.¹⁰⁰

One encouragement for exogamous marriages with maidservants and female slaves was the biblical mechanism for the child of an illegitimate relationship, a *mamzer*, to “purify his seed,” that is, cleanse his lineage to receive full status as a Jew, by marrying either a proselyte or a maidservant (Deut. 23:3). The eighteenth-century traveler R. Hayim Yosef David Azulai testified in his diary that in Constantinople he saw

a book written by a bastard who had “cleansed his issue” through a maidservant but MaHaRiBa [R. Yosef ben Lev] and the Rav Abraham ibn Ya'ish were hesitant, so he wrote a book about the matter and [then] gained agreement from Our Master [R. Joseph Karo], the RaDBaZ [R. David ibn Zimra], the MaBiT [R. Moshe b. Yosef of Trani] and the Rav Al-Sheikh . . . and I saw their signatures there [in the book].¹⁰¹

Finally, some maidservants even married their masters.¹⁰²

According to R. Yosef David, many masters married off their maidservants while young, out of fear that an unmarried maidservant posed great dangers, probably of a sexual nature.¹⁰³ One problem might well have consisted of inconvenient rumors and their quelling. Rabbi Ya'akov Sasportas (born 1620; Oran, Morocco, Hamburg, Livorno) handled such a case, in which “the unmarried serving woman of Reuven became pregnant and gave birth while still living/working in his house, two times [this happened], and she says she got pregnant from him and he denies it to her face and now she is pledged to be married.”¹⁰⁴

Even beyond marriage, many former slaves, especially women, affiliated with the Jewish community. One woman who had been brought as a non-Jewish captive of war to Constantinople and bought there by a rabbi eventually received her freedom from him. She (was) converted at her manumission and maintained her freedom from him. She (was) converted at a later date (1702) before a rabbinical court, where her trustworthiness (and that of her former master) convinced the court to vouch for her manumission and conversion despite her having lost all of the pertinent documents.¹⁰⁵ A non-Jewish serving woman sold by her Jewish master to another Jew was sent to the latter by sea, where she was captured by privateers. Landed at Leghorn/Livorno, she was redeemed by the Jewish community and there she converted to Judaism.¹⁰⁶ Cases such as this last one tell us little about the slave's motivations, which could have been spiritual (sincere affection for Judaism), pragmatic (a convenient means

of gaining liberty), or a combination of factors. In another case, a non-Jewish serving woman who became sick entreated her master to convert her, perhaps in the hopes of finding an eternal community after her death.¹⁰⁷

Other reports evince a clear desire to affiliate, though again, with unclear motivations. Captured at sea, another maidservant, whose behavior had already exasperated her master, used her smattering of Jewish knowledge to convince some Jews to redeem her. She later married a Jew, clearly living a *de facto* Jewish existence.¹⁰⁸ Another maidservant, according to her own story, had served a Jew before being sold to a non-Jewish woman who freed her. She later converted and married a Jew.¹⁰⁹ Finally, one case brought to R. Shmuel de Medina shows that some servants and slaves made their way into the Jewish community quite willingly. One maidservant bore a son to her master and had him circumcised:

She brought the son to her master before a judge of the city, from the government, and claimed that she was [her master's] wife and became pregnant from him and gave birth, and the judge compelled him to sustain and maintain her, [the judge] also did for her *kaibin* according to their [Muslim] religion (and since he did *kaibin* [the master] cannot sell her, for she is like his wife in all regards, according to what I heard and learned from experts in their custom).¹¹⁰ And this woman remained some years in the [master's] house on her own. Even after the death of the master there was no one who could tell her anything [about it], to say to her that she is a maidservant, and she would observe the teaching of Moses and of a Jewess like the kosher women of Israel, until she was made a midwife by/to the Hebrews, and she had some little money and she passed it to the treasurers to distribute, part to the land of Israel, may it be built speedily in our day, and part for inheritance and part to the burial society. And after her death the master's heirs came to claim the money for themselves.¹¹¹

The participation of this woman in her adopted community was tremendous and entirely voluntary. She maintained Jewish ritual practices, worked for and among Jews, and even left money to some of the kinds of causes typically patronized by philanthropic Jews.

In cases where the servants had (been) converted to begin with, we find complications within the household more internal to Jewish life. A question put to Rabbi Ya'akov b. Shmuel Hagiz (1620–1674) concerned how a Jewish master should go about having his Jewish slaves or servants serve him in the morning in light of their shared prayer obligations and the like.¹¹² Another question, this one put to Rabbi Yishmael b. Avraham Yitshak ha-Cohen (1723–1811; Modena), asked “about a maidservant in mourning, whether she is allowed to bake and cook for her master and if you should say no, can she bake and cook for members of the household and what about her being permitted to bake and cook for others?”¹¹³ Another rabbi dealt with the case of a slave

and a maidservant belonging to a Jewish couple who converted them and married them off to Jews. When the original owners passed away, the rabbi was asked whether the converted former slaves were obligated to mourn their former owners in accordance with the *halakhot* of children mourning for their parents.¹¹⁴ Apparently, even slaves whose conversion had not been completely proper were bestowed with a decent burial in the Jewish cemetery. Hayyim Avraham Gatinio treated a case concerning an old non-Jewish slave whose master, the wealthy Ya'akov Pexoham, converted her after much entreating, but she died before her immersion. Nonetheless, a coffin was made for her and she was buried in a Jewish cemetery. The writer who posed the question to Gatinio mentioned another similar case.¹¹⁵

We know nothing of the backgrounds of many of these maidservants. Chances are that most of them would not have been in a position to return home on being liberated, even if they had known whence they came. Certainly the negative pressure on “pagans” entailed the desire to avoid serving the dominant majority and may have encouraged entry into the Jewish community. Rabbi David ibn Zimra testifies that in Egypt, he saw that “all the maidservants at this time do not accept the *mitzvot* on their own accord, and even though they say they do, it is but insincerely, since they are from the sect of pagans and seek not to be sold to Muslims.”¹¹⁶ Spanish Christian servants, as appear in some of the responsa, presumably would also have felt more compatible with Iberian Jews than in a Muslim Turkish home.

Many of the published cases indicate that even in situations where doubts arose concerning whether a slave's manumission had been properly executed, a rabbi was consulted, since the owners or slave evidently desired the slave to be allowed into the community, often through marriage.¹¹⁷ Many reasons caused room for doubt. Some Jews simply took things into their own hands, as can be seen from the responsa as quoted concerning Black women slaves. According to the responsa of one Salonikan rabbi, a Jew whose non-Jewish maidservant's son begged him for liberation simply recited the formula for manumission and told the slave to go immerse himself before a rabbinic court.¹¹⁸ A case brought to another Salonikan rabbi involved a maidservant who immersed for the sake of conversion at the instigation of her master, without even bothering about the rabbinic court.¹¹⁹ As cited earlier, R. Shmuel de Medina of Salonika complained that the slaves and maidservants bought by Jews often ended up converting and marrying Jews, without anyone bothering to check whether they had been manumitted properly or at all.¹²⁰ To sum up, many cases point to the inclusion of former slaves into the Jewish community, even if rulings (especially in inheritance cases) often disfavored them and their descendants. This accords well with the evidence from non-Jewish eastern Mediterranean communities.

Despite halakhic understandings that a freed slave or maidservant assumed a rank absolutely equal to that of any other Jew, the social reality did not always agree. Classical Rabbinic opinion on slaves, though complicated and containing tendencies of kindness, generally held slaves in as low esteem as did Greek or Roman law. Those who had been slaves could not necessarily escape their past. Already Tosefta Kiddushin 2:10 negatively compared manumitted slaves to proselytes, as the latter had never been in the category of those cursed by Genesis 9:25, while female proselytes, unlike female slaves, were assumed to have preserved their chastity. Slaves were stripped of the natural and human relationships into which they had been born. One talmudic passage played on Avraham's command to his servant on his way to Mount Moriah: "[E]veryone acknowledges that a slave is considered to be without family connection, as it is written, 'sit yourselves here with the donkey' [Gen. 22:5], [suggesting that servants make] a people who resemble a donkey."¹²¹

The distinction between "family" and "property" appeared not just in agadic discourse but received potent application in the legal realm as well. Basing himself on B.T. Berahot 16b, Rambam held that in order not to threaten the legal and inheritance status of the child of a slave, "one does not call slaves or maidservants 'father so-and-so' or 'mother so-and-so.'"¹²² Social rather than blood status might blur these distinctions. Continued Rambam:

[I]f the slaves or maidservants were highly important and they have a voice and the whole congregation [i.e., community] recognizes them and the children and slaves of their masters [recognize their status], like the slaves of the *Nasi* [the official community representative or the ancient R. Gamliel, well known for his loving treatment of his slave, Tabi], then these it is permissible to call them "father" and "mother."

Warning readers of his Spanish condensation of the *Shulkhan Arukh* against buying stolen goods from disreputable individuals, R. Mosè Altaras cautioned that one should buy from slaves (and women and youths) only things known for certain to belong to them, conveying the traditional implication that slaves were less than trustworthy in this regard or at least had more incentive to abscond with the property of their master.¹²³

Hence, the attitude toward even those slaves who had been religiously absorbed remained ambivalent. Jacob Katz aptly called circumcised and converted slaves "half" Jews.¹²⁴ The *Shulkhan Arukh* marked an advance of sorts. The textual contiguity of the laws pertaining to slaves with those of converts (immediately preceding them) and circumcision (immediately following) projected the ideal of absorption; in Rambam's multivolume code, the laws of circumcision and converts came in the section entitled "Love / Ahava," those of slaves in the section entitled "Acquisition / Kinyan." The reality no doubt varied from

epoch to epoch, from slave to slave, and between one host community and another. The following fictional lament probably reflected reality to some degree, however: "[E]ver after shall I be known as a former slave — a *freed-man*," complained a slave who had inherited his master's wealth in a play written around 1550 by the Jewish Italian Leone de' Sommi, or Sommo.¹²⁵ Despite halakhic acceptance, this slave's social status remained questionable.

A MULATTO RABBI IN VENICE?

This survey of the small number of Black slaves and servants to serve in Jewish homes east of the Atlantic does not claim to be exhaustive. Some documents present more questions than answers. I include the following item more to open up possibilities than anything else. A Converso named Baltasar de Araújo claimed, in the course of testimony to the Inquisition of Cartagena de las Indias during the 1620s, to have known a mulatto rabbi in Venice, who ran a school and acted as a *mohel*, a ritual circumciser. De Araújo said he had profited from both of this rabbi's services. De Araújo's testimony should not be dismissed lightly; his detailed statements reflect his own long-standing and deep connection with Judaism. Born in Bayona, in Spanish Galicia, in the early sixteenth century, he was instructed in Judaism by his mother even before they fled the Inquisition some ten years later for Salonika, passing first through Flanders and Venice.¹²⁶ In Venice, the young Baltasar began attending the school

of a mulatto rabbi, a man very knowledgeable in the Law, who was the one who had circumcized him and had given him [the name Abraham Senior], and in the said school, in a notebook, in Spanish, the above mentioned taught him [Baltasar] to pray, telling him until where to pray at one time and where to pause, waiting for the others, for when he went to the synagogues with the rest of the Jews; and after he had learned to pray through the said book, they had given him another which had one page in Castilian and the other in Hebrew, which the said accused knew how to read and contained the same as the first.¹²⁷

There is no immediate reason to doubt the story's plausibility, even given the very real hermeneutical pitfalls of Inquisition records. If false, this story easily could have been told without the rabbi's skin color being noted. It would seem strange to concoct a mulatto rabbi, which would have seemed as unusual to Araújo's inquisitors as it does to modern readers.

As I showed, several responsa from Italian rabbis mention Black slaves, and we know from archival documents of the existence of others, even in Venice, although they had no traceable collective impact on any Italian Jewish community. For example, Filipe de Nis (alias Solomon Marcos) bought a Black slave, Luna Maura, when he was a trader on the island of São Tomé around 1566–67,

and had her baptized. The family was then living a Christian life. They later moved to Venice, where in 1586 Luna Maura "admitted" to the Venetian Inquisition "to having lived with the family as a Jewess in Venice when they subsequently judaized outside the Ghetto, but not to having attended any synagogue there."¹²⁸ This Luna Maura, according to Brian Pullan, stands as the "only well-authenticated case of a servant being converted to Judaism" in the records of the Venetian Inquisition.¹²⁹ In 1664, a woman identified as a Levantine Jew from the Old Ghetto, named Mora ("Black"), made out a will. She had lived in the house of one Rachel Aboaf, possibly as a servant, and left what little property she possessed to "a friend, a black woman servant of Tomas Mugnon."¹³⁰

Baltasar de Araújo fails to identify the mulatto rabbi he mentions. Also unclear is whether he is using the term *mulatto* to invoke the rabbi's shade of skin or his partial Blackness in the racial-administrative sense. Given that Jewish Venice at that time probably contained a number of such "schools," without further specification this rabbi, if real, would seem to have melted into historical anonymity.

HAMBURG-ALTONA

For northwestern Europe one also can rely on different sorts of records in constructing a portrait of social relations. For whatever reason, rabbinic responsa there dealt less frequently with questions concerning slaves, despite the impression that Jews held no fewer slaves and employed no fewer servants than in southern and eastern regions. It must be kept in mind that overall, far more Jews lived in the latter regions than in the northwest of Europe. And there indeed exist some Western responsa treating the matter of slaves, some already cited, mainly from Amsterdam rabbis of the eighteenth century.

Some of the elite Sephardic Jews who resided in Hamburg-Altona, mostly former Conversos from the Iberian Peninsula, owned Black slaves. Some had been brought with them from southern Europe; others were acquired by means of the growing northern European trade routes. In a document from 1680, Moses Josua Henriques, a burgher, merchant, and shipowner of Glückstadt, recalled that from the beginning of their settlement there his ancestors, like other burghers, Portuguese or otherwise, could fill their domestic staff only with Blacks. Henriques himself long possessed three Blacks and procured a fourth, named Emanuel, around 1677 by means of a local ship that annually plied the West African coast.¹³¹ It seems likely that at least some of the slaves of the Hamburg merchants had (been) integrated into the religion of their masters. One Vicente Furtado testified to the Lisbon Inquisition in 1605 that a Black woman named Felippa lived in the house of Álvaro Dinis in Hamburg. She

had come from Lisbon to Italy with his parents and, according to Furtado's testimony, had been living "in the Law of Moses."¹³² As previously mentioned, while still living as a Christian, Filipe de Nis, alias Solomon Marcos, Álvaro's father, had bought a Black slave, who accompanied the family to Venice and to open Judaism. The slave woman Luna Maura told Inquisitional authorities in 1586 that she had lived as a Jew with the family.¹³³

Other bits of evidence have surfaced regarding the few Blacks held by some of the Sephardic families living in Hamburg. In her last will and testament of 1651, Debora Hana Naar, alias Violante Correa, freed her Black woman slave Dimiana, though she was then to serve Debora/Violante's sister. The slave, who had accompanied her mistress from Portugal, was to receive new clothing and her mistress's laundry and bed.¹³⁴ In 1684, a Portuguese Jew who owned a Black was prepared to sell him to another Jew who had offered 50 Reichstaler for him. The slave fled to the altar of the Hauptkirche, where he raised "a great and pitiable cry" that awoke the entire town. The situation came to the attention of Prince Herzog von Braunschweig, who was moved to incorporate the Black, who later went by the name Rudolph August Mohrens, into his own household.¹³⁵

AMSTERDAM

The Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam had many contacts with Africans. Some of the early Jews had come as New Christians from Antwerp or the Iberian Peninsula with slaves or servants. Many of the Jewish merchants traded with the African mainland, either North Africa or south of the Sahara. They would often return with one or two slaves. In 1611, Spanish intelligence reports targeted Diego Dias Querido (alias Jacob Israel Belmonte), founding member of Amsterdam's first congregation, Beth Israel, and trader on the African coast. According to the information, Querido employed African slaves as interpreters in Africa and as servants at his Amsterdam home, and gave these slaves instruction in the laws of Moses, converting them to Judaism.¹³⁶ The wealthy De Pinto family employed or owned a retinue of domestics. In a manuscript from 1671, Ishac de Pinto recounts his escape from Antwerp to Rotterdam during the war with Spain, accompanied by his "boy / *moço*" Simon and coachman Bastiao. If either was Black, Pinto does not mention it.¹³⁷ A print by painter Romeyn de Hooghe shows a Black manservant attending the family of Ishac de Pinto as they depart their house for an awaiting carriage.¹³⁸ A 1682 illustration by Benjamin Senior Godines depicts an elite Portuguese Jew accompanied by his Black slave boy (Figure 1). The use of slaves by Jews in the urban environment of Amsterdam paralleled precisely their use in urban centers throughout Europe, such as Seville, where they "were employed in the kitchen, laundry room, and stable. They

on the street before the door to the women's section, presumably to socialize before beginning their workday, until being banned from doing so as disturbers of the peace by the Sephardic leadership in 1641.¹⁵⁰ The Sephardic mistresses would also send their slave and serving women to save seats for them in the synagogue, since, unlike in the men's section, seats in the women's section were not assigned.¹⁵¹ The Mahamad banned this practice as well in the same 1641 ordinance. According to a 1679 document, it seems that the wealthier Jewish women "were even accompanied [to synagogue services] by their non-Jewish maids," perhaps including their Black slave women.¹⁵² One mulatto named Selomoh Faia evidently felt at home in the community and generous enough to make one and possibly two separate contributions for the construction of the new synagogue dedicated in 1675.¹⁵³

A certain amount of class violence erupted around the nexus of Jews and slavery. As slaves or servants, the Blacks affiliated with Jews lived on the border of poverty, and in order to make ends meet often wavered between legitimate endeavor and criminal activity.¹⁵⁴ In 1612, a Portuguese boy in Amsterdam named Abraham Catton, together with an unidentified Black or mulatto man, stole some paper from a warehouse. Detained after having been reported, the boy confessed and blamed his accomplice, who had sold the paper.¹⁵⁵ Later that year, Domingos, a Black slave of Francisco Lopes Henriques, declared before the notary David Mostart "that a certain Liesbeth, living in a cellar in the Breestraat, persuaded him with sweet promises to rob his master."¹⁵⁶

Sometimes the violence bore less obvious motivations. Most dramatic, perhaps, in 1620, a Black man named Abraham approached and threatened with a knife a Sephardic youth named Isaaqe Spinoza, who was passing by in the street. A Sephardic man intervened, but the Black Abraham would not be pacified. Some members of the gathered crowd managed to embarrass or hinder him enough to persuade him to put away his knife, which he gave to a Dutch man. The Black went home, however, returning with some Dutch youths, whom he urged to "make mutiny, saying that it was necessary to kill all of the Portuguese." In order to avoid injury, the Sephardim took refuge in the house of Joseph Pinto, locking the door. In response, Abraham and his cohorts threw stones and broke bottles. (His having a bottle in his pocket is mentioned at the beginning of the incident; quite possibly he was drunk.) The Sephardim shouted for help, which arrived, and Abraham was apprehended and jailed. The Jews who testified before the notary the next day stated that this Black had harassed them on other occasions as well and otherwise attempted "to agitate."¹⁵⁷ His name, Abraham, is unfortunately not enough to prove his having had a connection with the Sephardic community, though how the Sephardim knew his identity is not clear otherwise. While the tone in which he is spoken of in the testimony conveys a lack of familiarity, perhaps purposefully, his obvious animosity against

"the Portuguese," by which he probably meant the Sephardim, may indicate a specific grievance against the youth he accosted and/or other members of that community.

On the other hand, slaves might have gotten caught up in the communal life of their masters in relations among the various populations of Amsterdam. In 1705, a public proclamation was issued in the wake of "the disorders which occur in the streets between different subjects of the nation and the *goyim*." Members of the congregation were commanded to warn "their sons and domestics" that they are henceforth "to avoid causing or being in the quarrels and other disorders because of the risk of rigorous punishment by the Senhores of the Mahamad."¹⁵⁸ Resentment such as the Black Abraham's notwithstanding, slaves and servants often served as proxies of their masters' quarrels or battles. Although taking up arms on behalf of their masters was not always voluntary, slaves and servants frequently internalized the sense of honor due to "their" household.¹⁵⁹ Due to similar public outbreaks, the *parnasim* issued the same warning – again mentioning domestics – in 1720, while by 1722, the city Burghermeisters and magistrates entered communications with the *parnasim* over how best to end these disturbances, generating yet a third and even more severe public warning in the synagogue.¹⁶⁰

Slaves and servants, Black or otherwise, sometimes merited burial in the Jewish cemetery. Between 1614 and 1630, the dates for which the records of the Ouderkerk Sephardic cemetery, or "*Bet Haim*," outside of Amsterdam have been published, a literal handful of slaves and servants appeared, including a number of Blacks and mulattos. Their burial site proves the community's acceptance of their Jewishness:

On the 28th of said [month, September, 1617] a woman slave of Abraham Aboaf was buried past the woman slave of David Netto.¹⁶¹

Abraham Aboaf and his wife had more than one Black slave, as a later entry noted: "On the 10th of said [month, March, 1621] Samuel Todesqo was buried along the fence of the raised platform [?] where the black women of Abraham Aboaf and Rifka Pereira are [buried]."¹⁶² On the 27th

of said [month, March, 1629] was buried Eliezer the black who belonged to Paulo de Pina [and] had his place in the 10th row, no. 18 – 32 –.¹⁶³

There was evidently confusion over Eliezer's burial spot, as evidenced by the "32" clearly added into the book. A later entry registered in grave number 32 an "Eliezer the black on March 27th."¹⁶⁴ He must have been moved, though when and for what reason the sources do not reveal. On June 29th of the same year, 1629,

Sara Ger [convert], maidservant of Abraham Coen Henriquez, was buried in the separate place outside the stockade.¹⁶⁵

On the 3rd of February, 1630, Sara the German, maidservant of Matias Roiz, was buried in the tenth row, no. 35.¹⁶⁶

A separate list of gravesites mentioned that in the seventeenth grave in the ninth row lay the body of "Sara the black woman of Eliahu Naar," while in the nineteenth grave of the same row lay the remains of "Judique Guerina [also derived from Ger = convert?] who was the maidservant of Eliau Valverde."¹⁶⁷

The following people were not listed as servants or slaves. If they had been previously, they could have been manumitted:

On the 25th of said [month, December, 1620] a mulata wife of the mulato Trombeta [= trumpet] was buried in this row next to David Soares.¹⁶⁸

The mulatto Trombeta possibly belonged to the family of a Rabbi Trombeta, about whom I have been unable to learn anything. Their name, meaning trumpet in Portuguese, could also have been derived from a musical profession or talent.

These names entail every servant or slave buried in the Jewish cemetery for the whole Amsterdam community. The number – eight or possibly ten, in addition to a mulatto couple who may have been servants or slaves – seems low for a community of several hundred families over a period of fifteen years. Yosef Kaplan estimated that by the late 1630s, a thousand "Portuguese" lived in Amsterdam.¹⁶⁹ Still, whatever slaves and servants lived with the community obviously served only those few families well-off enough to afford their services. It also should be kept in mind that the community's growth stagnated until the 1640s.¹⁷⁰ Clearly we are discussing the servile labor force of a very small elite. The remainder of this force must have consisted of *unconverted* slaves or servants, who of course would not have been buried in the Jewish cemetery even if they belonged to Jewish families, and Ashkenazic servants. Indeed, notarial records show that many other women worked as servants or helpers in Jewish households during this period.

A limited amount of information can be squeezed out of this cemetery record book. The cemetery already contained a separate section for servants and non-Sephardic Jews (witness the burial place of Sara Ger, who belonged to Abraham Coen Henriquez), established at its official founding in 1618, but no separate place for Blacks or mulattos, who were buried along with everyone else. It can be inferred that the mulatta wife (d. 1621) of the mulatto Trombeta converted to Judaism, while it would appear that he did not (unless he died after the manuscript's compilation in 1630). Still, his name, or that of his possible master, the Haham (= Rabbi) Trombeta, commanded enough attention, if not

affection, in the mind of the community – or of its secretary Abraham Farar, who compiled the two lists containing their names years after her death – to determine their collective identity. (In the listing of gravesites, hers is: "The wife of the mulatto Trombeta."¹⁷¹) In any case, these two stand as the only couple among the servants, the rest of whom seem to have been unmarried.

The number of Blacks and mulattos evidently made some members of the community uncomfortable. The leaders of several community institutions passed a series of ordinances excluding them from certain communal honors and ensuring their low profile (discussed at more length in Chapter 8). In 1627, Blacks and mulattos were forbidden burial unless they were strictly Jewish, then were further assigned a separate section of the cemetery in 1647.

Despite the restrictions following the initial wave of Jewish mulattos, it seems that the affection or need of Amsterdam Sephardim for Black slaves or servants did not taper off. A new row for burying Blacks had to be added in 1703.¹⁷² Burial records for the Jewish cemetery covering 1680 to 1716 reveal more Black slaves and converts:¹⁷³

5442 [1682]: On the 25th of same [Tisre] was buried Judica de Lopo, mulatta in the plaza of the blacks customarily used for them.

5445 [1685]: On the 25th of said [Hesuan] was buried a girl by order of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad in the place where the blacks are.

5447 [1687]: On the 11th of said [Tisre] a daughter of Abraham Israel Lorensillo in the place of the blacks.

5447 [1687]: On the 20th of said [Tisre] a black man of Araõ Leuõ Reno [?] in the Place of the said [blacks] by order of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad.

5447 [1687]: On the sixteenth of said [Hesvan] a mulatto boy of Araõ in the place of the said [blacks].

5456 [1696]: Was buried by order of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad a someone Cohen Palache, in a worse place of the Cemetery and more inferior than that of the blacks.

5462 [1702]: On the eighteenth of said [Nisan] was buried Ester the Black of Señor Nunes Enriques in . . . the blacks.

5462 [1702]: On the sixteenth of said [Tamus] was buried by order of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad a boy of Sara de Chaves [?] the mulatta among the blacks.

5462 [1702]: On the 22nd of said [Tamus] was buried by order of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad a child of Jacob aLucacs [?] Abendana in . . . the blacks.

5462 [1703]: On the 7th of said [Hesvan] was buried David Moreno [?] Enriques among the blacks.

- 5464 [1704]: 24th of said [Ab] was buried a daughter of David Pereira in the row of the blacks.
 5465 [Adar, 1705/6]: Was buried a child of David Nabaro in the row where the blacks are buried.
 5466 [1706]: On the 19th of said [Kislev] was buried Jacob Chebu Italian in the row separated apart of the blacks.
 5469 [1709]: Fifteenth of said [Tebet] was buried Jael a black woman who belonged to one of the people in the row of the blacks.
 5470 [1710]: On the sixteenth of said [Second Adar] was buried Sarah Convert black of the Salzedos in the Row of the blacks.¹⁷⁴

Several things can be learned from this list. For the thirty-six years from 1680 to 1716, Blacks and mulattas make up the overwhelming majority of the slaves who converted to Judaism. (Slaves who did not convert would not have been buried in the Jewish cemetery. Ashkenazic servants presumably would have been buried at the Ashkenazic cemetery.) Some of these entries referred to the probably colored "natural" children born to Sephardic men by Blacks or mulattas, for most of which children their slave status or that of their mothers cannot be determined. Oddly, however, very few conversions receive corroboration in other documents; I came across only one such item. In 1663, one Amsterdam Sephardic merchant received permission from the Mahamad to immerse and convert his Muslim maid (see Chapters 7 and 8 on the institution of the need to receive permission for this act).¹⁷⁵

The area for Blacks is said to have been "separated apart" from other parts of the cemetery, a change made in 1647. Since those born to a Jewish mother would have been buried in the cemetery proper, it can be deduced that none of the slaves buried here were born to a Black who had converted to Judaism. In this list, some of the Blacks are specifically identified as converts or Jews (whereas none were in the list of 1614-30), while others are not so identified, though all were obviously buried in some part of the Jewish cemetery. The place in the cemetery meant for Blacks seems to have included those of low status who were not Black. The lack of "racial" identification in the children of community members buried in the row for Blacks comes across as a silence of convenience. The cemetery contained a place for those whose status was even inferior to that of the Blacks, perhaps for the heterodox or heretics; whatever this Cohen Palache did seems to have raised no small amount of ire.¹⁷⁶

The language surrounding the 1703 expansion of the space for Blacks and mulattos reveals its instigators' motivations and goals, and introduces the racial reaction that ensued from the relatively high profile of Blacks in and around the Sephardic community (and that forms the narrative of Chapters 7 and 8). The Gentlemen of the Mahamad wanted a "place for the interment of Black Jews

and other unmeritorious persons." This space was to keep their plots "far apart from the tombs bought and prepared for diverse and principal persons of our Nation." The Blacks were both "Jews" and "unmeritorious." Their presence too close to the burial plots of various "principal" members of "our Nation" clearly generated worry about the erasure of status markers between the worthy and the unworthy.

To sum up, the sources provide a most inadequate idea of the full context of slavery within Mediterranean and European Jewish communities and of Blacks within this schema. Further research will no doubt turn up more raw data. Still, based on the sources surveyed, the range of experiences of Black slaves in Jewish homes in most communities differed little from those of non-Blacks in Jewish homes. Acceptance into the local Jewish community to some degree or other before and often after manumission occurred frequently, not a surprise given the quasi-familial status of a domestic slave's position and her near-total social isolation from her own people. Only in seventeenth-century Amsterdam did Blacks and mulattos find themselves identified as a specific set – their Blackness coming to stand in for their servility – a set increasingly excluded from full participation in the Jewish community in a manner unpracticed elsewhere and in opposition to halakha. (The similar situation of Cochin, India, comes up in Chapter 8.) The presence of Blacks and Jewish mulattos, relatively few, yet too many, in an Amsterdam where mostly Sephardic Jews seemed to own or employ them, led to a series of ordinances excluding them from certain ritual privileges and honors. This makes up the main story of Chapters 7 and 8.

Moshe's Kushite Wife

In the next three chapters I treat Jewish discourse about Blacks from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. In this chapter I explore images of one well-known biblical figure, the Kushite wife of Moshe (Num. 12:1). In the next chapter, I trace images, verbal and visual, of Kushites or Blacks in general, while in Chapter 6 I treat statements about the biblical figure of Ham and the curse alleged to have been put on him. Taken together, these differently angled perspectives help solidify comprehension of the rhetorical place of Blacks in Jewish discourse in the centuries spanning the transition from "traditional Eastern" slavery to the onset of "modern Western" slavery.

Early modern Jewish discourse about Blacks, even more than its non-Jewish counterparts, presents a "surprising and (to one trained as a historical critic) annoying sameness" of formal manifestations of textual Blacks.¹ Despite my close reading of Abravanel's textual Africans in Chapter 1 as reflecting a particular authorial manipulation, seeking therewith to unsettle notions of a homogeneous discourse, a more distant perspective shows that the bits of discursive data from which he constructed them and the resulting construction differ but little from those wielded by authors both before and after him. Throughout this period, Blacks were "good for thinking with" almost exclusively in certain stock situations, as ciphers for difference, as representatives of Otherness, of the exotic, of the corporeally, mentally, and morally inferior. They "fill the margins of texts devoted to their superiors."² These narrative presentations of Blacks "were of course not identical" from classical midrash to the eighteenth century, "but the differences . . . were not particularly illuminating — were less illuminating, at any rate, than an analysis of the disturbing fact of continuity."³ Although I point out patterning in the usage of Blacks where I have found them, little impression of the changing color of slavery and its new Atlantic mode registered in the Jewish discourse from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries whose provenance was almost entirely east of the Atlantic. At the end of Chapter 6 I offer some

explanations for both the patterning and its absence, themes I pick up again in Chapter 10 as Jewish discourse moves into the Enlightenment.

The Kushite woman mentioned without precedent in Numbers 12:1, whom Moshe had taken for himself, posed difficult problems for readers and exegetes of the biblical text. Who was this woman? Why was she never mentioned before? Did Moshe take her to be his wife? Was she thus his second wife? Was their relationship coterminous with the marriage to Tsipora, or did it come later? Was she merely a concubine? How could the greatest Israelite leader possess one if not two non-Israelite women? The persistence of this textual knot and the solutions proffered to untangle it enable a close tracking of continuity and change in attitudes toward Kushite women, relations with them, and some of the perceived significance of Blackness. I pick up the trail at the cusp of the medieval and early modern era, though few of the early modern statements did not have midrashic precedent.

The idea that Moshe had ruled over Kush and married a Kushite woman appeared in many places in ancient, medieval, and early modern Jewish and Christian discourse, mythic possibilities based on the historical conquest of Ethiopia by ancient Egypt in the twelfth century B.C.E. Many enormously popular works affirmed the legend of Moshe's Ethiopian exploits. The idea was brought up already by Josephus (ca. 37 C.E.–ca. 97 C.E.) in his *Antiquities of the Jews* (2.238–56) and Artapanus (second century B.C.E.; known from Eusebius, *Præp. Ev.* 27.432d). It informed the Aramaic translation (*targum*) of Pseudo-Jonathan. In the notes to his English translation of *Antiquities*, H. St. J. Thackeray stated that the legend comprises an "invention" of the Hellenistic-era Jewish colony at Alexandria, used to explain the obscurity of Numbers 12:1.⁴ The anonymous thirteenth-century *Sefer ha-Yashar* tabulated the reign of one anonymous ruler by aligning it with the reign of Moshe in Kush.⁵ Most prominently, the early medieval *Divrei ha-Yamim Shel Moshe Rabeinu* (= *Chronicles of Our Rabbi Moses*), elaborated the Ethiopian exploits of its eponymous hero.

Many rabbis had no problem accepting that Moshe ruled over Kush and even married a princess there, which helped solve the matter of the identity of his wife.⁶ In some cases, this tack made the accusation of Miriam and Aharon against Moshe center on the non-Jewish status of this woman, the rabbi implicitly or explicitly defending Moshe's marriage to a non-Jew as being part of the divine plan. Some rabbis harmonized the two options by stating that the Ethiopian woman was actually Tsipora.⁷ In some sense, this relationship, in either variant, reveals little about attitudes toward Kushites. For one thing, Moshe merely ruled over the Kushites, whom he helped to defeat the Egyptians. More significantly, according to *Divrei ha-Yamim Shel Moshe Rabeinu*, Moshe never consummated the marriage with his Kushite queen, as I reported

in Chapter 1.⁸ (This fact was not deemed necessary in the version of Josephus.)⁹ Indeed, according to most of the printed versions of *Divrei ha-Yamim shel Moshe Rabeinu*, he kept a sword between them in their conjugal bed for forty years! The Kushite king Nicanos died defending his land against the Egyptians. The king's officers made the incomparable hero Moshe the new king, "and give him as a wife the Lady, wife of Nicanos. And Moshe remembered the covenant of his God and did not approach her and put a sword between her and himself [i.e., in their bed] and did not sin with her."¹⁰ The queen in question may not have even been a Kushite, however, as Nicanos was actually the king of Rome (Edom) who had merely conquered Kush. If the text hints at a pattern of the conquering hero possessing the most politically and socially prestigious woman along with the territory, then she would have been Ethiopian. Still, Moshe's sexual restraint and the covenant of Moshe's God – perhaps an allusion to the invented prohibition against marrying women of Ham found in one manuscript version (see Chapter 1), perhaps a general ban on having relations with a non-Jewish woman – was not explicitly or directly linked with the woman's being an Ethiopian.

Many rabbis could accept the Kushite quality of the mysterious wife of Moshe in Numbers 12 only in a figurative fashion.¹¹ Even this tack did not always imply a negative evaluation. For some, this meant that Tsipora, the "real" referent of these passages, was Black like a Kushite because Midyan neighbored Kush and was sometimes called by the same name, or because the desert sun affected the Midyanites in the same way that the Kushites bore the effects of the sun's powers.¹² Those who offered such an explication often accepted Tsipora's Blackness as unproblematic, interpreting away the epithet "Kushite" solely in order to maintain the identity of Moses' one wife. Thus, according to Eliahu Daveih ha-Cohen's reiteration of the midrash from the Rabbinic compilation Sifre on the Book of Numbers (ca. fourth century; Palestine), Miriam and Aharon, in calling the woman in question a Kushite, wondered how Moshe could have separated from a woman who was "a Kushite, who is outstanding among women in her good deeds and in her beauty."¹³ Here one sees some of the difficulties of untangling in some of these commentaries whether Tsipora was a Kushite rhetorically or "in fact." It also opens up the major literary source for early modern exegetes, Rabbinic midrash.

In the Hellenistic era, a shift in the understanding of this text occurred, and it fell under the sway of the allegorical readings so popular in Hellenistic hermeneutics. The Ethiopian woman became aligned with beauty, in a direct and positive manner, but in a way that sometimes seemed to erase her Blackness as well. Onkelos, the second-century C.E. translator of the Bible into Aramaic, translated "Kushite" into "[a] Beauty." The question of why Moshe's wife was called Kushite by the Bible evidently troubled some of the classical rabbis,

since the redactors of the midrashic commentary Sifre explained the usage four times, with four opinions:

THE KUSHITE WOMAN. Tells [us] that everyone acknowledged her beauty just as everyone acknowledges the blackness of a Kushite. KUSHITE. According to *Gematria*¹⁴ [Kushite] is equivalent to beautiful. . . . FOR HE TOOK A KUSHITE WOMAN. This can teach [us] only that it's like [someone saying] "you have a wife who is pleasing in her beauty but not pleasing in her deeds" [or] "in her deeds but not in her beauty," but this one [Moshe's wife] is pleasing in both. THE KUSHITE WOMAN. Because of her beauty she is called Kushite like one who calls his pleasing son a Kushite to ensure that the evil eye won't gain power over him.¹⁵

These explanations form part of a midrash explicating the whole biblical episode. According to this midrash, cited in the name of Rabbi Natan, Miriam happened to be standing next to Tsipora when Moshe was informed that Eldad and Medad were prophesying in the Israelite camp. Tsipora bemoaned the fate of the wives of these two prophets: "Woe to the wives of these if they are stricken with prophecy for they will separate themselves from their wives the way my husband did from me." Thus, Miriam knew that Moses had separated from Tsipora, and she told Aharon. The midrash has a moral purpose: If Miriam, who did not mean to offend, was so severely punished, how much worse a punishment will befall someone who gossips maliciously?

This midrash proved quite functional.¹⁶ 1) It glorified Moshe by showing that he had the self-discipline to separate himself from and abstain from sex with a perfect wife (in order to be in constant readiness to receive the divine spirit); 2) it absolved Miriam of the offense, clearly implied in the biblical text, of complaining about Moshe's wife, by means of an inventive and invented tale (Miriam could even be seen here as siding with the feminine victim of tale (Miriam could even be seen here as siding with the feminine victim of a male prophet and his male god); 3) it interpreted the "Kushite wife" to be Tsipora, thereby eliminating the need to explain why Moses might have taken a previously unmentioned second wife; and 4) it utterly erased the straightforward sense in the biblical text that Moshe's wife was a Black woman of Kush, whose blackness had thus been allegorized (away) into an aesthetic or moral schema.¹⁷ Yet this schema still bore the traces of that which it tried to erase. For this midrash revealed an attitude toward the figure of the Kushite within it that was bifurcated into two polar extremes. On the one hand, the term "Kushite" signified her beauty; it was a euphemism for being outstanding. On the other hand, "Kushite" signified her ugliness; it was the talismanic protection against the evil eye, which ruined the beautiful and good, but which one could trick and avert by calling beauty its opposite.

In his book *The Mirror of Medusa*, Tobin Siebers explored the group dynamics at work in accusations relating to the evil eye. Most pertinent to my discussion

here is the relationship of the evil eye to praise or compliments bestowed on other people. According to Siebers:

A compliment is a show of desire, and as a result it often double-binds the complimenting and complimented individual. In normal usage, compliments may both embarrass their recipient and cause him to suspect that the benevolent statements conceal ill wishes or desires of appropriation. The ambivalent nature of praise forces the complimented party to interpret the intentions of the one giving the compliment, and his judgment will depend on the history of their relationship.¹⁸

It was this fear of praise that generated all the customs by which parents sought to prevent their children from becoming an attractor to a fascinator (someone with the power to cast the evil eye). Some such customs, with which readers might be familiar from their grandparents, included spitting on hearing a compliment. In southern India, "mothers paint black spots on their children's faces, chins, cheeks, and eyelids to deter compliments."¹⁹ Far more common, however, was the use of opprobrious names. "In China, children are called 'dogs,' 'hogs,' or 'fleas.' In India, male children are nicknamed 'dunghill,' 'grasshopper,' or 'beggar,' whereas 'blind,' 'dusty,' or 'fly' are reserved for females. . . . As a term of endearment, children [in Romania] are called *urîtule* (ugly thing, horror), a custom that leads to strained relations when applied to the children of non-Romanians."²⁰ Nearly all of these names denoted that which the society perceived as ugly, lowly, insignificant. Use of the term Kushite to ward off the evil eye, as testified to by the midrash, fits with the other mentioned opprobrious names for children. For the term Kushite to serve this purpose, it would seem to have already acquired fairly well-known negative meanings.

Before continuing with early modern Jewish figurations, it should be noted that some Catholic commentators generated rather different hermeneutic understandings of this biblical Ethiopian woman. According to José da Silva Horta, a positive interpretation of the Ethiopian wife of Moses recurred with notable prominence in medieval Portuguese and Spanish Christian exegesis.²¹ It is easy to see why. Deriving from Origen's commentary to Numbers 12 and repeated by Augustine, such an interpretation presented a Christological allegory in which the murmuring Maria (Miriam) and Aaron represented the Jews and Moses the law of God, while the Ethiopian woman represented the Church of Christ, whom the Jews would not accept as the newly beloved of God's law.²² This oft-repeated typology made positive use of the Ethiopian monks, martyrs, and virgins of patristic literature to establish a symbology denouncing the superseded murmuring Jews.²³ It had less to do with positive evaluations of Blackness than with devaluations of recalcitrant Jews. Yet not all Catholic exegetes found this approach useful. Alfonso Tostado (d. 1455), in his breathless synopsis of the Bible, related only that Maria (Miriam) and Aaron murmured

against Moses, were chastised by God, and Maria punished with leprosy – with the significant absence of any mention of a Kushite woman. Tostado's complete erasure of the Kushite woman from the narrative reflects the degree to which she had been deemed accidental, unneeded in its telling.²⁴ Perhaps Avraham Saba (d. before 1520s?) borrowed Tostado's aporia, as he, too, did not deem it necessary to make any mention of the Kushite woman.²⁵ Such a radical emendation was certainly convenient, but is impossible to attribute to attitudes toward Ethiopians.

Late-fifteenth-century Iberia witnessed increasing numbers of Jewish commentators appealing to interpretations that more directly invoked the Blackness of this Kushite woman. A number of medieval rabbis had described the accusation of Miriam and Aharon as being specifically anti-Black: Moshe avoided intimacy with his wife *because* of her Blackness.²⁶ Not all used this method. Another twelfth-century rabbi of Ashkenaz cited Sifre's wordplay – the name Tsipora was equivalent to "look and see/tsafu u-re'u" how pleasing this Kushite is – and added "for she was attractive and plump."²⁷ But the approach of positing anti-Black sentiments in the words of Miriam and Aharon increased after the fifteenth century and sharpened in detail. One sees in this period an increase in the use of anti-Black sentiment, placed not just in the words of Miriam and Aharon but also in the statements of the exegetes themselves. While in previous exegesis the term Kushite stood for the woman's foreignness (in a double sense), a good number of Jewish exegetes now made it the object of specifically anti-Black opprobrium, allegations some rabbis denied, yet a sure sign of the attitude's increase. These usages were prevalent in the exegesis of scholars born on Iberian soil or descended from Sephardic exiles. Perhaps it is not too far-fetched to understand their interpretations of this topos as a response to Christian exegeses.

Let us trace this homiletical approach in more detail. Rabbi Yosef b. Avraham Hayyun (born ca. 1425; Lisbon) had tutored the young Isaac Abravanel in Jewish subjects.²⁸ In his own commentary to the Torah, Hayyun understood the complaint voiced about Moshe and his Kushite wife (Num. 12:1) as being itself an iteration of anti-Black prejudice.²⁹ Hayyun took it at face value that Moses' wife was a Kushite: "And it [the Torah] said, 'on account of the Kushite woman that he took' [Num. 12:1]. And they [Miriam and Aharon] said, 'Kushite,' for she was from the seed of Kush."³⁰ Yet the biblical text stuttered over this Kushite woman, compelled to reiterate Moses' marriage to this Kushite woman. Why?

And [the text] repeated "for he took a Kushite woman" because the text's statement was still not understood [i.e., "on account of the Kushite woman that he took"]. What did that woman do that they blamed him for having taken her? For it was

possible that they accused him for taking her because she was lazy or sexually loose or drunk.

The Bible's repetition drew attention to the substance of the complaint, which, on Ḥayyun's reading, pertained precisely to the woman's essential quality of being a Kushite and not a subsidiary, accidental quality of some moral, behavioral defect. The litany of feminine flaws – laziness, licentiousness, drunkenness – might very well point beyond generic accusations against bad wives to reflect a specific set of behaviors seen as typifying slaves or Blacks:

Therefore [the text] explained, "for he took a Kushite woman," because the blame was solely on his taking a Kushite woman, from the seed of the criminal Ḥam, and he did not take a woman/wife from the children of Israel as did all of Israel, and this is a great insult to his law, that he alone is married to a woman from the seed of the [other] nations, let alone from the seed of Ḥam.

The Kushite quality of the woman was both literally and metaphorically problematic. She was also both Kushite and daughter of Ḥam, and the two seem problematic both independently and causally. On the metaphorical level, a Kushite woman represented a foreigner, indeed the quintessential Other. How could Moshe, the prophet, the national leader, take a wife from a foreign people? (Readers should remember that these issues had all been raised explicitly by medieval exegetes.) On a literal level, however, and independent of whether being a Kushite woman symbolized foreignness, being a Kushite woman here presented a problem in its own right: Kushites came from the worst kind of background.

It must be kept in mind that this viewpoint belonged to Miriam and Aharon; it was framed in Ḥayyun's narrative in an implicitly disapproving stance, since such discriminatory logic resulted in and merited the divine punishment of leprosy. Ḥayyun even provided Miriam and Aharon a rationale:

And one might ask, what did they [Miriam and Aharon] see now to speak with him [Moshe] about this? And we can say that since they saw him raised up to a great height, in his being officer and leader over 70 prophets who drew from his spirit . . . they [Miriam and Aharon] worried for his honor. And they spoke this not for the purpose of slander, God forbid, but as complainers and regretters about this for the sake of his honor; his being married – a complete man such as he – to a Kushite woman, and his students next to him, to daughters of Israel, and here he is in this worse than they.

Miriam and Aharon spoke out of "sincere" concern for Moses' reputation in the face of his marriage to such a low-status foreigner. The immediate juxtaposition of the "complete man" and the "Kushite woman" reinforced the feeling of incompatibility, recalling medieval philosophical language, such as that of

Yehudah ha-Levi and Rambam, which opposed Kushites to "fully developed" people. Yet, closed Ḥayyun, the text described Miriam and Aharon, the self-proclaimed keepers of proper and pure peerage, as "complainers / מחאונים," an allusion to the children of Israel grumbling against God in the previous chapter (Num. 11:1). Like these lost Israelites, says Ḥayyun, Miriam and Aharon here could think only on a material level.³¹

Others voiced similar critiques of these bad-faith arguments against Blacks, but their texts seem barely able to restrain the very assertions they sought to counter. Yitshak b. Yosef Karo (born ca. 1458; Toledo, Lisbon, Constantinople) rejected even Ibn Ezra's euphemistic efforts with a direct attack on anti-Black sentiments:

And further why did the text choose the term "Kushite" for her beauty, which is the opposite of its meaning. And if you say [as did Ibn Ezra] that this is [euphemism] like [calling the blind] "full of light," we found this in the language of the rabbis and not in the language of the verse. But it seems the slander that they spoke was [this:] that if [Moshe] desired a beautiful woman he would have taken one, but he took a black woman, by way of instruction, to say that he should not be suspected of desiring beauty, but rather [desired] only to fulfill the commandment to have children.³²

In this complicated piece of voicing, Karo's Miriam and Aharon accused Moshe of purposefully marrying a Black woman in order to prove that he did not concern himself with surface appearances. Karo's exegesis denied that he would have, as Moshe's great modesty (Num. 12:3) alluded to the fact that he "never noticed whether she was attractive or ugly." The fact that the anti-Black comments of Miriam and Aharon are called slander implies that Karo found their views distasteful and mistaken. Yet he allowed the assertion that Blacks were unattractive to remain uncontested. Moshe, that is, did not care one way or another about his wife's "looks," but the general consensus held that a Kushite woman could not serve as a representative of beauty, hence the "signal" in Moshe's choice.

As should be clear already, most of the exegetical treatments of Moshe's Kushite wife revolved around her attractiveness or lack thereof. Black women as erotic figures had become a literary staple in Portugal and Spain by the mid-sixteenth century.³³ Jewish discourse evinced a strong resistance to this figuration at the same time that it wielded it. R. Moshe Albelda (1500–before 1583; Greece, Albania), probably born in Spain, presented an ingenious solution to the double nature of the interpretations regarding the Kushite woman. His own exegesis took both the straightforward and euphemistic interpretations into account. If she was beautiful, then Miriam and Aharon spoke about Moshe in that he took a woman from another people. If he did so, they complained,

where was his great cleaving to God and prophetic solitude? But if the Kushite woman was ugly, then Miriam and Aharon were jealous of him insofar as his more elevated holiness enabled him to be satisfied with a woman who was black and ugly.³⁴

At moments, the force resisting the view of Moses' wife as a Kushite produced enormous blindnesses and creative insights. Rabbi Eliezer Ashkenazi (1513–1586; Salonika, Egypt, Famagusta, Venice, Poznan, Cracow) recounted at length Rashi's midrash-based explanation that all acknowledged Tsipora's beauty the way all acknowledge the Blackness of a Kushite. After this Ashkenazi said, "and here, the doubts in this matter have multiplied."³⁵ Next, he summed up the crux of the euphemistic midrashim: that Tsipora insulted prophecy, that she was called a Kushite because all acknowledged her beauty as all acknowledge ■ Kushite's blackness, and that "on account of the Kushite woman" means "on account of her separation." His conclusion: "all these things – an enlightened heart will keep them at a distance and not accept them as the straightforward meaning of the scripture."³⁶ Ashkenazi's stance here reflects his humanist leanings in approaching canonical texts.³⁷ In place of the opinions he rejected, R. Ashkenazi offered an interpretation of an allegorical order. The term "Kushite woman" referred to Moshe's powers of prophecy, which aroused the jealousy of his siblings. Since prophecy was compared to a woman by some of the earlier rabbinic sages, and since Moshe was said to have communicated with God by means of a "speculum that does not shine / שאינה מאירה" – a metaphor for unmediated prophecy, uncompromised by reflection of anything other than the divine source – the complaint of Miriam and Aharon did not refer to a real woman, Kushite or otherwise. It referred to prophecy.³⁸ Because of the hidden mysteries at issue, "it is not possible [for the Torah] to say 'on account of the non-shining glass that Moshe had taken,' therefore the Torah said by way of a riddle, 'for he had taken a Kushite woman.'"³⁹

The Torah's riddle metaphor functioned by linking the pure blackness of a Kushite with the pure translucency of this speculum:

The text explicitly called her "Kushite" because she was black, not emanating light, like a Kushite, and when the text repeats, "for a Kushite woman he took," it was as if it said that he took her [i.e.], that he himself was the cause for this, in what he requested from the Holy One Blessed be He, saying "I will not be able to carry this burden by myself [Deut. 1:9; also Num. 11:14]."⁴⁰

According to Ashkenazi's allegory, Moshe took on prophecy in order to aid himself in exercising his task of leadership. The literal Kushite in the text disappeared – it could not exist on its own, in and of itself – leaving behind a Kushite's metaphorical blackness. The aid for seeing, the "glass," mediated between the divine and the human, producing nothing of its own and permitting

nothing extraneous. Ashkenazi's use of the expression "a speculum that does not shine" appears idiosyncratic, representing a reversal of its talmudic origins. There (B.T. Yevamot 49b and Sukkah 45b), the nonshining speculum represented "mere" prophecy – clouded by images and forms – while only Moshe merited communicating with God through the more powerful "speculum that shines," that is, illuminated pure, unmediated flow from the divine. It might be thought that Ashkenazi misremembered or stretched these talmudic sources in order to align the nonshining nature of the speculum with the woman's blackness, here put to positive use, as Moshe's appendage of prophecy. But Blackness, in Ashkenazi's reading here, was laudable for what it did not do, given its absolute negativity: give off light, distract by demanding attention. The uncited source for Ashkenazi's exegesis is the Zohar (Parshat T'rumah, nos. 61 and 62), showing the degree to which many of the remarks about Moshe's Kushite wife partook of an abstract and fairly static internal rabbinic conversation, in addition to dialogue with changing social realities.

The treatment of this biblical narrative by Moshe Alsheikh (d. after 1593; Constantinople, Safed) reveals more early modern nuances. Alsheikh made mention of contemporary popular opinion, which ran toward the highly unfavorable. He wrote: "[A]bout this I have heard people say that Tsipora was black and not beautiful [a play on Song of Songs 1:5] and they proved it [by] saying 'Why did Moshe separate from her? On account of her being a Kushite and ugly.'"⁴¹ He rejected this line of reasoning, but he also rejected the euphemistic figurative interpretation from Sifre – Kushite equals beauty – with the stark retort that "this is difficult, the change would be [akin to] that between darkness and light."⁴² Alsheikh accepted the straightforward meaning of the text, as made clear by the words of "the rabbis" that Moshe reigned over Kush for forty years and took an Ethiopian wife, but from fear at night lest he approach her, he put a sword between them and did not go near her for forty years "because she was a Kushite and not a Jewess and did not convert."⁴³ Here it is not clear whether Kushite stands as a metonym for non-Jews in general or as an autonomous reason for Moshe's action.

Rabbi Hayyim b. Yosef Hazan (d. 1712; Aleppo) offered the same denigrating view as one of two possible interpretations for this incident, before dismissing it:

[A]nd it is possible to say . . . that the word "Kushite woman" says what it means, that is, that she was ugly. As the earlier sages said, they [the Midianites] were tent dwellers, in the eye of the sun and she [Miriam] saw that she [Tsipora] was not wearing jewelry, and she knew [that Moshe had separated from Tsipora]. And this is what the text said, "for he had taken a Kushite wife," that is to say, that I [Miriam] would not have known whether he [Moshe] had renounced procreation, but because the wife

he had taken was a Kushite, that is to say, ugly, and I saw her unadorned – from this I knew that he had renounced procreation.⁴⁴

R. Hazan brought the same counterproof as R. Alsheikh against the idea that Moshe separated from his wife because of her being an ugly Kushite. Moshe had, indeed, separated from his wife, but because of his continuous contact with the divine presence.⁴⁵ Yet Hazan put forth the equivalence of “Kushite woman” and “ugly” without refuting it, indeed put it forth in a manner stronger than any previous exegete. The refutation proffered by the biblical text itself, Miriam’s leprosy, came into play only implicitly and seems rather to have receded into the background. Likewise, Shmuel b. Hayyim b. Yosef Vital (1598–ca. 1678; Damascus, Cairo), who tried in one sermon to unpack the dualistic midrashic exegesis of “I am black but comely” (Song of Songs 1:5; Exodus Rabbah, ch. 23, 49). He offered as one possibility the suggestion that “black” is complimentary language, as in ‘for he took a Kushite wife [Num. 12:1].’ But Vital quickly rejected this, saying, “But this cannot be, since ‘black’ is the opposite of ‘attractive.’”⁴⁶

The commentary of Mordehai ha-Cohen of Tsfat (late sixteenth century; Safed) shows that not all early modern commentators found Kushite women good for thinking with as a negative comparison.⁴⁷ He completely rejected the possibilities raised by resorting to *Divrei ha-Yamim shel Moshe Rabeinu*, suggesting that the text should be understood only in a figurative manner (דרך הלצה). The Kushite woman referred, rather, to Tsipora, and more particularly to the matter of her appearance. Moshe “did not take her previously [in Midyan] because of her beauty, as Rashi said “Kushite woman” in gematria equals “attractive,” for even if she should be black like a Kushite he would take her, for Moshe our rabbi does not go after beauty: ‘Grace is deceitful and beauty is vain’ [Prov. 31:30].”⁴⁸ One of the virtues of Moshe, then, was his immunity to the deceits of appearances, here figured straightforwardly but also metonymically as the attractiveness of a Black woman.

The layers of intertextuality in other treatments of the Kushite wife of Moshe approached dizzying heights of allegorical exegesis, but still revolved around the aesthetic and sexual attractiveness of Kushite women. Yeshayahu Hurvits, or Horowitz (1565?–1630), moved from eastern Europe to Palestine. In the work for which he became famous, the *Shnei Luhot ha-B’rit* (= The Two Tablets of the Covenant), he presented an intriguing explanation, perhaps based on that of Eliezer Ashkenazi. The wife of Moshe should be understood to be the Oral Torah:

And I will also clarify the matter of “for he took a Kushite wife.” And to explain this, I will preface what Rashi wrote [Num. 12:1]: “The Kushite woman.” Conveys that

all acknowledge her beauty the way all acknowledge the blackness of a Kushite.” And certainly the Torah, that writes of this affair, hints at some mystery. And thus wrote the Ba'al ha-Turim [ad. loc.]: “the Kushite woman” is in gematria ‘a beauty,’ and this needs clarification. I already wrote that the Oral Torah is called “woman/wife.” And she is a Kushite woman and from this “a beauty,” and this needs explanation. We found that the Torah makes glad, as is written [Ps. 19:9]: “The precepts of the Lord are just, rejoicing the heart.” And we found the contrary, she [Torah] is called “Wisdom,” for she undergirds the strength of man [B.T. Sanhedrin 26b].⁴⁹ Our rabbis said, may their memory be blessed, “This is the Torah, ‘should a man die in his tent’” [Zohar pt. 2, 158b; Num. 19:14], [that is,] that he kills himself for her.⁵⁰

Let us trace the complicated series of reversals here. Onkelos introduced the translation of “beauty” for “Kushite woman.” He meant it directly: In the Greco-Roman Mediterranean in the first centuries of the common era, Ethiopian women came to be, among other things, exotic objects of erotic desire. The midrash Sifre, compiled around the sixth century, already made the positive euphemism of Onkelos partially negative. Rashi, an eleventh-century commentator in what is now France, further unlinked the concepts of beauty and Blackness, by reiterating the Sifre passage: “Kushite woman: conveys that all acknowledge her beauty the way that all acknowledge the blackness of a Kushite.”⁵¹ Beauty and Blackness stand parallel but not necessarily connected; both indicate the possession of an extreme and absolute quality. Hurvits responded to Rashi by offering, as a mystical allegory, an opposing “straight” understanding of “Kushite woman” and “[a] beauty” in the name of the Ba'al Turim (twelfth century; Provence). Hurvits linked the joys given by the Oral Torah and those of a Kushite woman, exploiting to the fullest the erotic aspect of the traditional figuration of the Torah as feminine. One need not trace out these tropes completely, but they offer an amusing double entendre through the summoned proof texts.

To conclude, we turn to the translation and commentary published by the Amsterdam Sephardi José Franco Serrano at the end of the seventeenth century.⁵² According to his notes to the biblical text, the Kushite woman – *Etiopissa* in his Spanish translation – was none other than Tsipora. Franco Serrano brought forth a translation nearly identical to the same Sifre passage mentioned by so many previous exegetes, but in a manner revealing a remarkable discursive distance. “The Holy Text,” he explained, “calls her ‘an Ethiopian woman’ by way of irony, as if denoting with this her extreme beauty.”⁵³ He did not quote any of the words of Sifre, a text with which most of his recently-become-Jewish readers would not have been familiar, which drew out the play between Blackness and beauty. Nor did his comments anywhere develop the issue of Blackness. Instead, Franco Serrano’s reticent retelling moved the

semiotic unit under discussion as far as possible from Kushite Blackness without troubling the text's mention of an Ethiopian woman. While Franco Serrano's term "irony" may not have differed rhetorically from the "contrary language / term" *לשון הפוך* of Sifre and some medieval commentators,⁵⁴ the emptied connection between "Ethiopian" and "extreme beauty" ("as if") – this extremity being an essential and not accidental attribute – now evoked nothing so much as the opposition of these two terms.

Other interpreters proffered other semantic connotations of blackness. Yosef b. Hayyim Tsarfati (sixteenth century?) interpreted the blackness of this Kushite woman as signifying her bereavement at being pushed away by her husband's heavenly obligations: "[E]ven though he [her husband Moshe] is alive, his wife is a widow and black like ■ Kushite[.] now that he wed her he separated from her and she was left like a widow and black during the life of her husband."⁵⁵ Rabbi Shlomo Alghazi (seventeenth century; Smyrna?) understood usage of the term Kushite in Numbers 12 as implying certain distinctions between Jewish and Kushite women. Basing himself on the midrash, Alghazi stated that Miriam and Aharon saw that Tsipora wore no jewelry and that *that* was the stimulus of their comment to/about Moshe. "Even though she is beautiful," they reasoned, "why does she grieve without jewelry, becoming ugly and resembling a Kushite woman."⁵⁶ Alghazi's interpretation reversed the usual midrashic usage of Kushite in this context, wherein the outstanding Kushite blackness pointed to outstanding beauty or moral quality: Here, Tsipora's natural looks, unadorned by jewelry – cultural productions signaling the status of possessing culture – resembled the appearance of a Kushite woman.

Even if the exegesis of Numbers 12:1 and its context by many of these Sephardic rabbis ultimately condemn Miriam's denigration of the Kushite woman's Blackness, the manner of doing so bore a certain weakness. Few approached the forcefulness of the condemnation proffered by the Jesuit preacher Antonio Vieira, for instance, in a sermon he delivered, circa 1630s(?), in Brazil to a confraternity of slaves. Perhaps the audience shaped the rhetoric – none of the rabbis here discussed conceptualized that they were addressing anyone but "Jews" in their writings, and certainly not Blacks. Vieira made Maria's punishment an explicit rebuke for her prejudice: The punishment suited the crime "in order that Maria learn in her whiteness not to deprecate the blackness of the Ethiopian woman." Continued Vieira, "How much better for her to be blacks without leprosy than whites and leprous!"⁵⁷

One notes throughout the Jewish treatments of Moses' Kushite wife the continuous and thorough ambivalence concerning the looks of Kushite women. They represent both polar opposites: exotic attractiveness and the repulsiveness of the Other. Never are their appearances "normal." Perhaps because of the limited scope of the topos and the fact that it deals with marriage and/or

sexual attraction, almost without exception every Jewish exegete – all men, of course – appeared interested only in the aesthetic or somatic aspect of what being a Kushite woman signified. This monovocal exegesis, especially by the seventeenth century, might be contrasted to that of the London Protestant exegete Matthew Poole (1624–1679). In his voluminous commentary to the Old and New Testaments, Poole objectively recited the many possibilities for explaining the meaning of Kushite in Numbers 12:1. That "Kushite" signified "[a] beauty" he left until nearly the end of his list. This reasoning merited less space than many of the other possibilities, most of which revolved around "naturalistic" or ethnographic explanations.⁵⁸ Although non-Jewish perceptions of Blacks, especially in Africa, were highly gendered as well, and views of Black women manifested the same kind of attraction/repulsion fixation, Jewish understandings of Moshe's Kushite wife bring these features into strong relief.

The early modern Jewish textual repetition, vehemence or anxiety, surrounding the "question" of the attractiveness of Kushite women might have related to widely separate factors. One was the first printing of Midrash Sifre in Venice in 1545, bringing out with the new force of the printed word the earlier midrashic meditations. The redemptive turn to *midrash* among many of the Sephardim who had fled the Iberian Peninsula may have strengthened the usefulness of such topoi as Moshe's Kushite wife.⁵⁹ Another factor might have been the not infrequent contemporary situations, described in Chapter 3, casting elite Jewish men and Black maidservants in the Sephardic eastern Mediterranean onto the threshold of boundary making and breaking. The anxiety of Jewish authors over the repulsiveness/attractiveness of the Kushite woman might even have stemmed from ambivalence about the perception of Jews by non-Jews (as will be discussed in Chapter 7). Ultimately, the "racialized language of beauty" that was increasingly brought to the fore in these sites within Jewish discourse suggests a particular instance of the growing early modern need to construct as natural these "willed" differences between kinds of people.⁶⁰

Overall, the lack of significant changes in the constellation of notions associated with Africans is startling. This general stability begins with the ethnographic vocabulary itself. Early Rabbinic and medieval Jewish discourse appear to have been familiar with the names for specific African peoples.² But the continuity of the terminology (*Kushim*) makes it difficult to assess discursive change. According to Alan Richard Schulman, writing in the *Encyclopedia Judaica*, "in modern times '*Cushi*' is a Hebrew term for a Negro."³ This was not always so. From the Bible to the early Middle Ages, the term "*Kush*" referred to a geographical and political entity.⁴ By the medieval period, however, "*Kushite*" was being wielded as a synonym for "Black people."

ETHNOGRAPHY

"Actual" Blacks, both in their distant, exotic homelands and within Jewish communities, comprised the object of ethnographic interest among some Jewish authors. A 1525 geographic treatise of Avraham Farisol constitutes one of the few texts of its kind to appear in Hebrew around this time. Many of Farisol's geographic and cultural depictions came straight out of contemporary travel reports. The travel reports of the Italian Alvise da Cá da Mosto (or Da Cadamosto) and Pedro de Sintra served as his main sources, taken often verbatim, as David Ruderman has indicated, from the version published by another Italian, Fracanzano da Montalboddo.¹⁰ In his chapters on Africa, Farisol openly cited "the epistle of the investigators," while in a later chapter he explicitly cited a Venetian edition of Montalboddo.¹¹ As in these fifteenth-century travel journals, the attempt at accurate information was genuine, built-in biases notwithstanding. Positive qualities of the African peoples were frequently noted. Yet the overall portrait was of primitive Blacks who lacked the attributes of a sophisticated, even civilized, way of life. The Kingdom of Budomil – which Farisol called Bundomil / בונדומיל – drew praise from both Cadamosto and Farisol, yet

its inhabitants cultivated sex more readily than, say, agriculture, which they had only recently learned from visiting Europeans:

The king and every governor are steeped in licentiousness and they are jealous over their wives. And they seek to increase [their capacity for] sex with medicines and also to increase and swell the thickness of the penis . . . by rubbing in various herbs or the venom of some animal known to them. For these women, in looking at a man, will not be satisfied with the wild grapes [small testicles?] of those poorly endowed and those with small penises. . . . But today they have barely managed to begin to sow domesticated plants, wheat and barley . . . and they have also begun to imitate us in the making of many tools and crafts. . . . All the men and women of the districts are sorcerers and practice magic. . . . It is the practice of the women in their joy and passions of love to dance and leap by the light of the moon to the melody of the voices of large drums and strange violins and the hitting of other instruments which are in their hands and fornication is of great account there and there is no disgrace in fornication because it is an important *mitsva* [= commandment] for them.¹²

Treating India, Farisol understood that many Jews lived near the Ganges River and the deserts of Calicut. These Jews were continually threatened and attacked by Ishmaelites and Blacks.¹³ Blacks represented the literal enemies of some outlying Jewish communities, as well as the figurative opposites of civilized norms. In assessing Farisol's depictions of Africa and its Black inhabitants, his disregard of earlier Jewish sources must be kept in mind. Although he knew of the travel reports of Eldad ha-Dani and Benjamin of Tudela, he ignored them in the *Igeret*.¹⁴ These Jewish authorities would not have presented a noticeably different perspective on Blacks, but Farisol perhaps felt that non-Jewish authors lent more authority to his own work.

Yosef b. Yitshak Sambari (1640–1703), writing a history of the Jews of Egypt in the 1670s, repeated various traditions regarding Blacks from Muslim geographers and from Benjamin of Tudela. One reported that near the source of the Nile stood a magnetic mountain, from which flowed a stream, settled by people resembling animals; another theory had it that one of the Nile's strands formed a lake north of the state of Kimama (כִּימָמָא), home of the Blacks who ate people.¹⁵ Yosef Yisashar b. Elhanan Baer (end of sixteenth century; Prague) reiterated the opinion that "the Kushites make their wives public [sexual] property and the children born to them do not know and recognize their fathers."¹⁶ Any number of parallels can be found in authors from Catholic and Protestant Europe.¹⁷ The Africa of monsters appeared occasionally in Jewish discourse, but decidedly less so than in non-Jewish travel literature or classically influenced humanist texts.¹⁸

Closely related to these ethnographic depictions was the linkage of African Blacks with paganism, idolatry, or complete lack of religion.¹⁹ Some writers

picked up the medieval notion that the peoples of Hamitic descent indeed originated idolatry. Samuel Usque, who fled Portugal in the 1530s for Italy, wondered about the justice of idolaters and evildoers living peacefully throughout the world while the Jews suffered the fates they did in the Iberian lands: "In Africa, the people commit turpitudes beyond all human comprehension. . . . And above all, they are not Mohammedans, or Jews, or Christians, nor do they have any religion or offer prayer to any thing; rather they live like the beasts of the field."²⁰ Denying that the Egyptians who enslaved the Jews were thus better than them, Usque asserted in a chapter entitled "Origin of Idolatry" that the "first god they worshipped was Ham, son of Noah, the worst of his three sons." Because "the wicked sorcerer" Ham ruled over Africa, whose capital was in Egypt,

these peoples took him for a god, and as such they obeyed his laws and judgments and did not attain to any higher knowledge of God than of seeing Him [*sic* ?] as the first king and monarch whom they were subject to in their region. And changing his name, they called him the god Saturn. They built cities and many temples in his honor, and offered sacrifices to him.²¹

In a similar vein, the writer Daniel Levi (Miguel) de Barrios (1635–1701; Spain, Brussels, Amsterdam) said in one work that the first people to fail to honor wisdom and, by implication, lack the fear of God were certain descendants of the biblical Kush. These Barrios opposed the God-fearing supporters of Solomon, who conquered them. Barrios linked these scornors of wisdom and religion with unreason or insanity, calling them "*locos*."²²

Statements about Blacks from another cosmopolitan Sephardic author in Amsterdam, Rabbi Menasseh Ben Israel, combined traditional figurations of Black Africans, Jewish mystical understandings, and contemporary ethnographic sources. Ben Israel published a work on the soul, *Nishmat Hayyim*, in 1652. Within its variegated themes, he treated the powers of sorcery. As evidence that sorcerers can indeed transform themselves into the shapes of animals, he cited "the sages of the nations," who testified to this effect in "many stories that occurred in the world."²³ Ben Israel supplemented this international array of textual and eyewitness support with a lengthy description of the magical prowess of black African sorcerers:

And in Guinea, the city [*sic*] which is on the continent of Africa, the blacks strike their fingers with a small knife between the flesh and the nail and remove by means of a certain horn of a male goat some blood and write with it on a board how they submit themselves to a demon and work great wonders. . . . Among them are some who transform their shape into that of a cat or goose or other animal and they enter the houses and kill the small children and they say that after their deaths the sorcerers go to their burial place and cut out their hearts and sacrifice them

to demons. . . . Among them are some who travel by magic, making a journey of many days in but a few. And there are some who go levitating in the air between heaven and earth, as happened to one black. . . . And all types of sorcery are found there because they are blacks and their souls are from the side of the unclean [מספרא דמסאכא].²⁴

Finally, as part of this valuable contemporary discursive currency, Ben Israel cited a story he was told by "a reliable man of our nation who settled among them for some forty years." Two chapters later, he again chose an example from the magical practices of Black Africans: "And in Guinea, a city on the continent of Africa, when the black sorcerers want to capture and kill elephants they take dirt from under where the [elephants'] feet have tread and tie it up in clothing and with certain words lead them to their slaughterhouse."²⁵ That he devoted so much attention to these black sorcerers reflects the common contemporary view of blacks as nefarious, barely civilized people. If one was discussing black magic, what better topos could be found?

Various elements of Ben Israel's passage might come from any number of sources. Da Cadamosto noted about the people of Gambia that "great credence is placed in spells, and other diabolical methods."²⁶ Writing at the beginning of the seventeenth century, Friar João dos Santos described how some of the inhabitants of East African Cafraria "are great sorcerers, and speak with the Devil, whom they call Master of Sorceries."²⁷ Samuel Brun, from Basle, visited Loango and the Congo River between 1611 and 1613; regarding the former, he stated that "if they fall ill, they promise to present the Devil with one of their slaves, and they keep such promises; . . . they wretchedly kill the aforementioned slaves."²⁸ Cape Verde trader Francisco de Lemos Coelho, who described western Guinea in the 1660s, related that the clerics among the Muslim Mandinkas "write on, and read from, wooden tablets only."²⁹ During the 1590s, the Englishman Andrew Battell wrote, without providing details, that the residents of the town of Mani Mayombe, in the region of Angola, "are for the most part Witches, and use their witchcraft for hunting and killing of Elephants, and fishing, and helping of sicke and lame men: and to fore-cast journeyes, whether they shall speed well or evill . . . in this Countrie they use sometimes to bewitch one another to death."³⁰ The account of another Cape Verde merchant, André Álvares de Almada, written around 1595, recounted how the Fulos of the Gambia River region controlled their cattle with verbal commands: "When the Fulos wanted the cows to halt, they spoke to them in their language and they stopped, and when they wanted them to resume the march, they spoke (again) and they set off."³¹ The earth containing the footprint of an intended victim was held to possess great efficacy for magical purposes. Examples can be found among African slaves in the Americas.³² Yet no traveler to Africa seems to have mentioned the practice.

An even more fruitful excavation of Ben Israel's passages results from a search of second- or third-hand literary projections onto Africa, as many of the elements of Ben Israel's description comprised standard features of discourse about European witchcraft and sorcery. One sixteenth-century Iberian source connected classical and post-biblical myth with contemporary ethnography, reporting:

There were among the ancients Lamias [one of the terms for witches], phantasms of demons in the form of beautiful women, who, attracting with flattery children and youths, devoured them. In the interior of Africa there are wild beasts with the face of women, also Lamias, who, with their most beautiful breasts exposed, attract men and suffocate them.

Citing the New Testament and other authorities, the text then identified the ancient and exotic demon-animals with "a witch who suffocates children," with Lilith, with the Furies, and with the night-traveling *strigas*.³³

Some of the key elements brought by Ben Israel appear mostly in the context of European witchcraft, however. The use of blood or fat from (dead) infants for spells or magical unguents was a staple of European lore regarding witches, although the removal and sacrifice of hearts does not appear in this context. This latter element was, of course, common knowledge about native American religious practices.³⁴ Sealing a pact with the devil with blood also formed a standard component of allegations regarding witchcraft. In the records of the Portuguese Inquisition, one can find several defendants (all from the mid- to late sixteenth century), including at least one mulatto, who confessed to communing with the devil, who, they said, asked them to draw blood from a knife cut on the little finger of the left hand to ensure his aid.³⁵ Other defendants before the Portuguese Inquisition mentioned the writing out of a pact with the blood drawn at the devil's request.³⁶ In one of these cases, the defendant testified that the devil drew blood from three of his fingers "with a white and sharp horn the size of a knife," with which bloodied instrument he wrote out the letters of their contract.³⁷

It is intriguing to note that some of Ben Israel's facts appeared in Jewish texts as well. The spiritual potency of the cuticles comprised a theme within kabbalistic thought, something he probably knew well: The space between the nails and the flesh marked the one gap in the protective spiritual shell surrounding humans, demons were thought to reside in nail parings, and Jewish women were told to leave their clipped nails as offerings to the demonic powers (*sitra aħra*).³⁸ The use of soil on which the intended object of magic had walked was attested already in the Talmud (B.T. Sanhedrin 67b and Hulin 7b).³⁹ A description of female demons kidnapping and eating children can be found in the medieval narrative of Aħima'az b. Paltiel.⁴⁰ Ben Israel's depiction of Black

sorcerers could, of course, be the result of the misprision commonly caused in these games of ethnographic "telephone": An anonymous Dutch description of the Mina Coast (ca. 1600) noted that the inhabitants "use no letting of blood, but onely make a hole in their bodies with a knife to let their blood come out."⁴¹ Still, many of the key elements used by the Portuguese-born Ben Israel stood remarkably, even suspiciously, close to home.

What is strange about Ben Israel's account, then, is not anything about its content but its context. Given his liberal use of a European textual history replete with allegations of and trials against continental witchcraft and sorcery, why did he dwell almost exclusively on examples from Black Africa? Jean Bodin's and Ben Israel's other sources discussed any number of sixteenth-century cases from the French territories, Germany, Flanders, Spain, England, Bulgaria, and Turkey, not to mention examples from the Bible, Church Fathers, and medieval thinkers; *not once* did they cite an example of sorcery from Black Africa.⁴² Perhaps Ben Israel did not wish to duplicate the many known examples from Europe or was even trying to demonstrate his own knowledge of the subject. Though only a surmise, it is also quite possible that he feared offending Christian readers and thus deflected accusations about sorcery onto the terrain of Black Africa, consensually dubbed primitive and superstitious.⁴³ If Ben Israel's Black sorcerers served as such a deflection, it indicates a convenient usage for a Jewish author: hiding behind a hegemonic racial discourse in order to share its self-reflection of superiority while avoiding critique of the dominant majority, though it too manifested the same problematic magical traditions.

THE ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICANCE OF BLACKNESS

Human Blackness as a physical phenomenon generated persistent debate about its nature and significance. Early modern authors from a wide variety of backgrounds tried to determine whether black skin constituted an inherited feature or a feature caused by environmental circumstances. Many, such as Sebastian Münster (1489–1552) and Louis Le Roy, followed classical and Muslim authorities in holding that black skin derived from the excessive heat of the equatorial sun.⁴⁴ Miguel Cabello de Balboa, a Spanish priest who resided in Quito in the late sixteenth century, proffered a detailed climatological explanation for black skin. He argued that over a period of centuries, Blacks transferred to northern countries like Flanders or France would experience a lightening of their skin color.⁴⁵ On the other hand, the Spanish physician Juan Huarte de San Juan (d. 1588) argued that Blacks in Spain communicated their color to their descendants through their seed, that is biologically, an increasingly popular tack among theorists; since these Blacks no longer lived in Ethiopia, environmental factors could be ruled out.⁴⁶ Many of the attempts to solve this problem understood it

to entail a *metaphysical* level as well. The Englishman George Sandys (1577–1643) vehemently denied that natural causes produced human Blackness. Blacks are "[n]ot so by reason of their Seed, nor heat of the Climate: Nor of the Soyle, as some haue supposed; for neither haply, will other Races in that Soyle prooue black, nor that Race in other Soyles grow to better complexion: but rather from the Curse of Noe vpon Cham in the Posteritie of Chus."⁴⁷

Like their non-Jewish colleagues, Jewish authors evinced uncertainty on the subject, although they seemed to concern themselves less with explaining its causes. Blacks might represent a form of humanity whose most distinguishing feature, their skin color, marked an essential, unchanging, and out-of-the-ordinary facet. According to Avraham b. Yehuda Hazan (early seventeenth century; Salonika), "the blackness of a Kushite would never depart . . . for it is natural to them."⁴⁸ Yet others acknowledged that skin color could change across the generations. R. Ya'akov b. Shmuel Hagiz (1620–1674; Italy, Jerusalem) was sent a query regarding whether one had to say the traditional blessing upon seeing a Kushite, "Blessed are You who varies the creatures."⁴⁹ The response of Hagiz reflects many aspects of the confused debate about the nature and significance of Kushite Blackness:

It seems that one should [say this blessing]; that is, [upon seeing] one who was born Kushite but his parents are white. But for the children of Kushites it seems that one should not make the blessing. For the former we are sorry. But afterwards, the way of the world is such that a Kushite bears a Kushite. But if they are Kushites and gave birth to a white, like that King of Arabia [Midrash Tanhuma, parshat Naso, 7], one may say [the blessing] "Blessed is He who is Good [and does Good]."⁵⁰

Hagiz here expressed a notion that stretched back to the classical world and continued into the modern era. Blacks and Whites might produce offspring of a color different from themselves. The cause generally given revolved around the belief that the visual and even mental stimuli beheld by the woman at the time of sexual intercourse produced physical manifestations in the infant. Thus, ■ Black couple might give birth to a White baby if the mother had been looking at white decorations during intercourse.⁵¹

The theories about how children can come from differently complexioned parents is of less concern here than the reaction of Hagiz to the possibility. Like Sandys, he held Whiteness to pose a "better complexion." Hagiz introduced unprecedented changes into the custom for reciting the blessing upon seeing a Kushite, reflecting both the increasingly complex ethnic makeup of his world and his feelings about it. For a White Kushite – could he have meant a light-skinned Black, a mulatto, or even an albino Black? – one should bless the good God who makes things good, a blessing said on hearing good news, whereas for ■ Black from White parents – whatever that might mean – one praises

the God who made variety in the animal kingdom. The two blessings imply a clear axiology: Approaching Whiteness and leaving behind the Blackness of one's parents represented a boon, while moving toward Blackness comprised a tragedy.

BLACKS WITHIN SIGHT

As the query put to Hagiz reveals, Blacks were sometimes noticed in day-to-day life. Where a Black population was more significant, they garnered more notice, though mentions of Blacks remained universally brief. In Egypt, where Black slaves of various backgrounds were frequent – in general as well as in Jewish households – they attracted much attention, mostly negative. In previous chapters I cited the complaints of Rabbi David ibn Zimra about the particular licentiousness of Ethiopian maidservants, who, he claimed, used sex to emotionally and legally ensnare their masters. The quoted responsum of R. Ya'akov b. Shmuel Hagiz shows that Blacks had become a frequent enough phenomenon that at least one Jew or Jewish community somewhere in the Mediterranean – remember that, like most queries to rabbis, the source of the query had been excised in the printing process, if it had ever been stated – wondered whether this blessing, said by implication only on seeing rare and exotic kinds of humans, still obtained. The answer essentially declared Blacks too frequent a sight to warrant saying this blessing. A century earlier, R. Ibn Zimra had reached the same conclusion, showing that the transition from “exotic” to “everyday” comprised a socially constructed matter.

Many statements regarding local Blacks came from the Italian peninsula, where Ethiopian Christian envoys and pilgrims had been arriving since at least 1402. As a source for his information about the realm of Prester John, Avraham Farisol cited what he had heard from “the black priests who arrived and continue to arrive each day and relate in detail the reality of many Jews among them [in Abyssinia]. And in Rome there is a sect made up of these priests, whose number is close to thirty, residing in a monastery established anew for them.”⁵² Farisol accurately described the group of Abyssinian Christians who had come on a pilgrimage to Rome at the end of the fifteenth century, founding a monastery called San Stefano degli Abissini.⁵³

Less text-bound genres let in more of the extradiscursive context in which early modern Jews might have viewed Blacks.⁵⁴ An undated sixteenth-century letter from an Italian Jew mentions going before a Cardinal Boromio in Rome and his assistant, who is called “the Sudani / הסודני.”⁵⁵ More pregnant images also appeared. An undated letter from a sixteenth-century Italian Jew referred to a woman healer at whose hands a friend's son died as “the Kushite woman.” It is unclear whether the allusion indicates that the healer was a Christian or

a Black, or whether it meant she was “black in her deeds,” in the language of the midrash.⁵⁶ R. Yehuda Aryeh (or Leone) da Modena reported in his autobiographical *Life of Yehuda* about the peregrinations of his youngest son, the ne'er-do-well Isaac. At one point, having experimented with living in Livorno and then Amsterdam, Isaac announced that he was off to Brazil in the Indies and, on his departure, his father gave him up for lost. In 1642, however, Leone wrote,

I received a letter from my son Isaac, may God his Rock protect him and grant him long life, from Brazil in the Indies, telling me that he was a rich and leading merchant there, and that he possessed more than four thousand reals, as well as Black slaves. He said that he would yet return to his home and his wife and that he would send gifts to her and to me.⁵⁷

Here we get a glimpse of the psychological structure by which slave-owning Jews may have increased their sense of social status and self-esteem. Whether true or not, Isaac signaled to his father his having “made it” through his possession of Black slaves.

Another, similar, view of New World Blacks comes from some of the descriptions of the Portuguese forces that ousted the Dutch and the Jews from Brazil in 1654, after a long campaign begun in 1645. In a description of several contemporary miracles wrought by God for His people, the Jews, Saul Levi Morteira (1596?–1660), rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese congregation in Amsterdam, offered the example of the escape of the Jewish population from Brazil and from the rabidly anti-Jewish Portuguese. As a foil to the glorious, noble Jews they hated and persecuted, Morteira portrayed the members of this militia as comprising the basest demographic elements: “blacks, mulatos, outlaws, the poor, the riffraff [lit., barefoot, i.e., badly armed and barefoot soldiers . . .], the hungry and those desirous of improving their fortune.”⁵⁸ In a Hebrew poem written while still in Brazil, Rabbi Ishac Aboab da Fonseca referred thus to the leader of the Portuguese rebellion, João Fernandes Vieira: “From the gutter he [Portugal's king] raised an evil man, whose mother was of Negro descent, a man who did not know his father's name.”⁵⁹ No doubt Aboab da Fonseca's fears (quite justified) about the significance of a Portuguese takeover added fuel to his passionate denunciation of this enemy. But it remains unclear whether the insult to which he resorted in a moment of crisis, which wittingly or not mingled earlier ethnographic observations about primitive Black African sexuality and marriage with more contemporary social commentary, was completely foreign to his everyday sentiments.

On rare occasions, Jewish discourse noticed Blacks in the context of their historical condition. The parallels of the Black and Jewish diasporas had been perceived or concocted by Jews and Blacks long before the twentieth century.

The sixteenth-century R. Avraham ibn Migash, personal physician to the Ottoman sultan, explicitly linked the debasement and exile of Jews and Blacks. He held that the Jews' planetary patron is Saturn (Shabtai). This heavenly body is appointed over

chains and death and jail and poverty and disgrace and shame from this world and over every obstacle. Insofar as Saturn presides over wisdoms and thoughts, it reigns over the Jews, and therefore they are troubled in this world. And it is appointed over the slaves in the lands of the Kushites and because [it rules over] destruction, it undoes all business and government. And because it is banished from this world it is appointed over the worry and over the filth of people in their actions and in their clothes and speech and it indicates everything black and decline from the level of honor.⁶⁰

Not all thinkers made this comparison between Jews and Blacks. The Italian rabbi Menaḥem b. Moshe Raba also discussed Saturn's role in the historical enslavement of the Jews in Egypt – "and as the Egyptians saw that the sign of Israel indicates slavery and lowliness, they said that the planet Saturn, which is the house of slaves, signifies slavery for Israel" – yet did not draw the contemporary equivalence to the situation of Blacks.⁶¹ The statement of Ibn Migash reflected widespread ancient and medieval theory. The *Regimiento de los Príncipes*, attributed to Thomas Aquinas, recorded that Ptolemy proved in the *Cuadripartito* that because of the influence of the heavenly bodies, human customs are differentiated according to the differences of the constellations.⁶² Hence, it may well be that Ibn Migash was quoting previous rabbis without attribution, another indication of the stasis generally reigning over Jewish statements concerning Blacks. R. Yosef b. Shalom Ashkenazi, known as the Rabad of the Sefer Yetsirah (ca. 1260; France, Spain, N. Africa), was said to have linked Jews and Ethiopians under the sign of Saturn, while R. Shmuel ibn Zarza wrote in the fourteenth century that "[t]he Ethiopian, the Sandian, the Tabian and the Berber nations and the Jews are under [Saturn's] influence."⁶³ Zarza was quoting from R. Joseph ibn Wakar, in whose work, according to Moshe Idel, only the Jews, and not the other nations, were listed. Furthermore, both Zarza and Ibn Wakar held the linkage to Saturn to signify rather differently, for under it "fall the powers of thought, of understanding and of the maintenance of things[,] design, knowledge of the secrets and the service of God, blessed be He[,] the rational soul, thought and understanding and the existence of things." What is important is that for both positive and negative readings, Jews and Kushites might be seen to share the same astrological-cultural fate.

On occasion, Jewish thinkers explicitly acknowledged that the contemporary condition of Blacks appeared even worse. Commenting on Amos 9:7,

the sixteenth-century Rabbi Moshe Alsheikh took the allusion to Kushites to signify more specifically than the many commentators who read it to mean that the Jews were like all the other nations in God's eyes.⁶⁴ Indeed, noted Alsheikh, this biblical comparison was made in surprise, to puncture precisely such notions: "[I]f you are like the rest of the nations then you have nothing over the most rejected nation of them all," that is, the Kushites.⁶⁵ In the next century, Saul Levi Morteira voiced a similar comparison. Arguing that divine providence toward Israel signified something more particular than mere heavenly favoring of all underdogs, as had been put forth by a Portuguese royal advisor in Ibn Verga's *Shevet Yehuda*, Morteira retorted that if this were the case, "much more was [divine providence] needed toward the blacks, who are so low and wretched that they are sold and bought like beasts, and the same goes for the [American] Indians, who are so subjected and oppressed under the Spaniards."⁶⁶

KUSH AND KUSHITES IN LITERARY AND EXEGETICAL DISCOURSE

Barely a handful of European Jewish texts approached the level of detail of non-Jewish discourse regarding Blacks. Literary treatments remained vague, repeating stock topoi. A few curt, dry mentions appear scattered through texts by early modern Jewish authors. Blacks continued during this period to appear in the traditional ways. Kush often signified a place rich in resources and ripe for trade or plunder. The Sephardic chronicler Eliahu Capsali (ca. 1483–1555; Ottoman Empire) described, perhaps with implicit condemnation, the Portuguese king, João II, during the 1490s, as "far wealthier than all the other kings because of his ships that haul gold from the land of the Kushites once every three years."⁶⁷ The poet Ya'akov Frances (1615–1667; Mantua, Florence) used "the merchandise of Kush or a ship of Egypt" as emblems for things of high value.⁶⁸ A reference in a Hebrew sonnet by R. Ya'akov Sasportas (ca. 1610–1698; Oran, Tlemçen, Hamburg, London, Amsterdam) to various precious stones – "rubies, topazes from Kush" – figured Kush as a supply site for exotic and precious (the two here intertwine) raw materials.⁶⁹ A more humorous mining of the same vein, perhaps even satirical, appeared in a poem of Leone da Modena (1571–1648) dedicated to the turkey bird (in Italian Galli d'India), who "reigns" "from India to Kush [Book of Esther 1:1]," and who "sought to approach the king's table."⁷⁰ All of these usages reflected the current commercial attractions drawing Europeans and their gaze to "the Indies," and can be compared with any number of contemporary non-Jewish works.⁷¹

Kush and Kushites served to represent those distant from Europe and its civilization, both physically and metaphysically. In Leone da Modena's youthful translation of the first stanza of *Orlando Furioso*, Ariosto's enemy Moors (*mori*)

became Kushites.⁷² Another poem of Modena's, a two-line mocking ditty, insulted the ignorance of its unidentified targets by connecting their utterances to Kush:

Debased in all, of all those lacking knowledge,
title, connections, honor, gold and wealth.
Their mouths are seated in the heavens
and their tongue will go to the land of Kush.⁷³

This poem can bear several, contradictory readings. One might consider it an attack on the colonial aspirations of Italian Catholicism, with Kush serving as the geographic victim of their "heavenly" intentions. Another might deem Kush here an appropriate geocultural end point for the tongues of the ignorant: a land at the end of the earth and even a land whose people lack knowledge. In one of his sermons, R. Yitshak Karo (born ca. 1458; Toledo, Lisbon, Constantinople) compared the world to a human body, on the bases of biblical and midrashic sources. Israel comprised its heart, Egypt its sexual parts, and "Guinea is the legs, as they are ugly."⁷⁴ Probably on the basis of medieval accounts of dangerous Kushites by writers such as Benjamin of Tudela and Shem Tov Falaquera, cited in Chapter 1, according to the dream interpretation manual of Shlomo b. Ya'akov Almoli (before 1485–after 1542; Spain, Salonika, Constantinople), one who dreams that she is in the land of Kush "will be in great trouble."⁷⁵

The Italian rabbi Abraham Yagel (1553–ca. 1623; Mantua region) used Ethiopia as the setting for his retelling of a story popular in Italian literature. He recast the story's usual local Italian backdrop, moving it to Ethiopia.⁷⁶ The basic outline, as far as our topic is concerned, relates the story of an Egyptian maidservant, "captured beyond the Nile river by pirates who brought her to the land of Ethiopia. There they sold [her] to a wealthy" Jewish nobleman. He became enamored of her and pressed her continually to sleep with him. Despairing of escape from his pressure, the virtuous maidservant confessed all to his master's wife, who arranged to secretly appear in her stead that night and sleep with her own husband unknown to him. Thus found out, the nobleman made up with his wife, but made the maidservant's life miserable. Hearing the pure maidservant's pleas, God sent Job to extricate her from the situation "and to make her beauty known to the son of the Ethiopian king so [that] he will seek and take her to be his wife." Indeed, the story ended with the consummation of this joyful matrimony.

Yagel's idiosyncratic version of this story can be seen to contain some reflections, however vague or confused, of the current realities of slave owning in the eastern Mediterranean. On the one hand, the maidservant's captive trajectory from "beyond the Nile" to Ethiopia and servitude in an elite Jewish home seem accurate enough. What the Jewish nobleman, said to be a brother of the

biblical Nabal the Carmelite from the area of Hebron (I Sam. 25), was doing in Ethiopia is not stated. Perhaps Yagel implicitly set the story among the Jewish communities of Ethiopia. Although there appears to be little narrative need for setting this formalistic tale in Ethiopia, perhaps it allowed him a certain amount of "realism," as well as the security of distance in depicting Jewish slave owning as occurring in "the East" rather than "at home," especially as the character of the Jewish nobleman was so despicable. On the other hand, it could have allowed Yagel to weave in the figure of an Ethiopian Jewish king, though he never was explicitly said to be Jewish. The maidservant's eventual redemptive marriage to the Ethiopian king, who occupied no textual space as a character on his own, bespeaks both the imaginability of such a marriage as well as its conceptual limits. The biblical Moshe's marriage in Ethiopia might well have served as a narrative model for Yagel. The religion of both the maidservant and the Ethiopian king were not revealed; if they were both non-Jews, their marriage would have posed no problem from a religious perspective. If they were both Jews, also an implicit "historical" possibility, again no problem would arise. It is interesting that the Ethiopian king is the one who needed to be swayed to recognize the beauty, already described to readers, of this presumably dark-skinned woman, perhaps a reflection of the self-superiority traditionally maintained by Ethiopians over other Blacks and their similar favoring by Muslims, perhaps a projection of "White" aesthetic and somatic preferences onto non-European noble savages.

Yagel's story can be compared with one written by Matteo Bandello (1485–1561), a court writer from the area of Genoa, concerning two faithful slaves from the kingdom of Prester John belonging to the sultan of Ormo, allegedly an island off Ethiopia's coast. The slaves, Maometto and Caim, show more loyalty than the sultan's rebellious son and help restore order to the kingdom.⁷⁷ Bandello's story, like Yagel's, showed that slaves can be loyal, but was placed in an appropriately distant and proverbial "oriental" setting. In several ways, Yagel's plot also bears similarities with contemporary Iberian drama, which often deployed noble, well-born Africans as characters.⁷⁸

Even more mundane Blacks served as springboards for the construction of Jewish self-identity. In a sermon taking off from the text of Proverbs 31 ("A Jewish self-identity. In a sermon taking off from the text of Proverbs 31 ('A woman of valor'), Abraham Yagel defended the practice of Jewish women learning Torah by means of a fascinating rhetorical play of contrast: "[i]n order that we do not think that she is like one of the blacks who do not have the mind or heart to speak because of the weakness of their intellect and the grief of their heart and their natural fear that the little that they speak will be a rebuke [to them] and absurd thoughts."⁷⁹ The rich evocation of the impediments to African Speech is not unambiguous; implied are a number of comparisons between Jewish and African responses to diaspora and persecution. That Yagel

contrasted Jewish and Black women itself reveals consciousness of their shared situations but also of their divergent statuses. His idealized Jewish woman ran her own household, exercising power and imposing proper order over children and maidservants, the latter group including Black women such as those described here.⁸⁰ His image of melancholic Blacks stood in contrast to the usual lighthearted and light-headed Africans of, say, Iberian drama and would seem to have alluded to a mood induced by exile and servitude as much as any natural disposition.

Perhaps one subtext of Yagel's use of blackness can be gleaned from a sermon of a contemporary Italian rabbi, Shmuel Yafeh Ashkenazi. In a meditation on whether the political nature of humans stands as a good or as a distraction from higher and more spiritual goals, Yafeh Ashkenazi noted:

One who isolates himself [from human society] will be overtaken by melancholy, sometimes going out of his mind. And his imagination will overtake him, to the point where he will fear demons and spirits and "the sound of a shaken leaf will chase" [Lev. 26:36] him. And the sages already said, "either company [i.e., society, friends] or death" [B.T. Ta'anit 23a]. This corroborates the one who said, "anxiety in a man's heart dejects it" [Prov. 12:25].⁸¹

The common Renaissance term for melancholy, "the blackness," was here given a distinctly social and political setting that dovetailed powerfully with the social and political condition of Blacks left unspoken by Yagel. Such a reading followed the distinctions made already by Rambam, whose parable in his *Moreh Nevuḥim* (bk. 3, ch. 51) specifically assigned the southern Kushites and northern Turks a place outside of the civil state. The temporal Othering that kept the individual Black stunted in a kind of intellectual and moral childhood performed similarly on the possibility (or impossibility) of collective Black development – it is no coincidence that many of the texts featuring negative comments about Ham cited "political philosophy."

Moshe Alfalas (late sixteenth century; Tetuan, Salonika), in a written elaboration of a speech he gave at the Moroccan wedding of a fellow rabbi, wove a homily about suitable couples from four biblical figures to whom God provided a person or animal in response to their having made a vow: Abraham's slave Eliezer, Caleb, Sha'ul and Yiftah. To the man who could kill the giant Golyat, Sha'ul had promised riches as well as the hand of his daughter in marriage (I Sam. 17:25). Wondered Alfalas, "and if a Kushite or goy [non-Jew] or slave had come out and slain [Goliath] would he have given him his daughter?"⁸² These three kinds of men made obviously unsuitable marriage partners. Note that this hypothetical Kushite did not come under the category of "slave" or "non-Jew"; his demerit was precisely his being a Kushite. Several pages later, Alfalas returned to the similar vow of Caleb regarding the man who could

conquer the town of Kiryat Sefer (Josh. 15:16, Judg. 1:12), qualifying himself by stating that "for all this there could be a wise slave or a wise goy."⁸³ But not a wise Kushite? For Alfalas, then, the quality of being a Kushite evidently eliminated consideration of suitability independent of intellectual, social, or religious status, which could not undo the nature of this quality.

An invocation of African speech appeared in the commentary of Shmuel b. Avraham Laniado (d. 1605; Haleb, Syria) on the Second Book of Samuel.⁸⁴ The Kushite messenger sent to David to report the death of his son Avshalom (18:21, 30–32) generated the following remarks from Laniado:

This Kushite thought that the king would rejoice in the death of Avshalom, who rebelled against him and sought his life, but he erred, since a father forgives his son. "And here came the Kushite and the Kushite said" [II Sam. 18:30] – for if he was an actual Kushite from the land of Kush who converted, it makes sense that it says again "and the Kushite said," to relate that this utterance was that of a Kushite, for they are simpletons and do not know so much.⁸⁵

It is not exactly clear what Laniado intended in this depiction of Kushite speech. He might have had in mind something similar to the complaint of one Spanish Jesuit, who wrote during the 1560s or 1570s from the territory of Florida regarding what he deemed the incompetent translation skills of his interpreters, "on account of their being not very intelligent, for they are a brown-skinned woman (*una morena*) and a mulatto."⁸⁶ Perhaps Kushites, allegedly lacking an appreciation for family connections, as evidenced in the charges of unrestrained sex even with parents or siblings, would not have understood a father's sympathy for his own son. His words were truthful, then, but did not convey an appreciation that Avshalom was David's son. Perhaps Kushites lacked the intelligence and sensitivity that would have enabled an appropriate communication with King David. But even if Laniado's messenger was an Israelite, that is, if the text called him "Kushite" only metaphorically, he continued, it might have been because of the nature of his report to David, which was that of a Kushite: "It is also possible that [the text] called him a Kushite in this matter, for he drew his speech out longer than warranted by what he had to say."⁸⁷

Laniado's second characterization of Kushite speech resembles the usage of Blacks as comic figures in sixteenth-century Iberian theater and literature.⁸⁸ In these works, the speech of Blacks, among other features, found use as an object of amusement, mockery, and derision. Their apparent difficulties producing of "correct" Portuguese or Castilian yielded numerous literary representations of Black gibberish and deformed pidgin-language. Other highlighted characteristics of Black speech were its infantile nature, lewdness, lack of grace, prolixity, and semantic incomprehensibility.⁸⁹ Perhaps Laniado had been familiar with this



FIGURE 2. Blacks dancing and making music, from Passover Haggada, Venice, 1629. Reproduced from *Hagadat Venezia 5389 – Venice 1629*, facsimile edition (Bnei Brak: Shmuel Mor, 1975). Reprinted by permission of the publisher.

literature; though born in Syria, he was the grandson of a refugee from Spain. By the time he served as rabbi of the community, it had become dominated by the many Sephardic arrivals who, no doubt, continued to be immersed as much as was possible in the culture of their native land.

Visual treatments also evoked traditional negative images of Blacks. An illustration in a 1629 Passover haggada from Venice depicted a group of little Blacks (pygmies?) consorting with turban-wearing, music-making idolaters (i.e., Muslims) for the verse, "Pour out Thy wrath on the [non-Jewish] nations" (Figure 2).⁹⁰ As mentioned earlier, the notion of the ancient Ethiopians and/or other early descendants of Ham as the originators of idolatry constituted a widespread view. The preacher Gregorio Garcia cited Diodorus in calling the Ethiopians the first to possess idols.⁹¹ Another widespread view held Ham to be an archmagician, master of the powers of nefarious magic.⁹² These various understandings coalesced with the medieval conflation of Blacks and devils until rather late. Theresa de Jesus (1515–1582), whose writings reflect her intense and continual wrestling with demonic forces, described how one time "I saw next to me an abominable little black man, complaining desperately that he was losing where he had hoped to gain. When I saw him, I laughed and was not afraid."⁹³ In his *Colloquium Heptaplomeres* (completed 1588), Jean Bodin had his skeptic, Senamus, point out, based on Leo Africanus, that in some parts of Africa demons are white, whereupon he jokes, "This distinguishes the Ethiopians from demons – in color, I suppose."⁹⁴ Nonetheless, in the preface to his 1580 *Démonomanie*, Bodin pointed to the recurring testimony

of witches that demons "which show themselves in the form of a man usually are black and taller than others, or small like dwarfs."⁹⁵ The humanist Joseph Scaliger (1540–1609) reported an encounter with a Black man on a horse as he rode by a marsh with some friends. The mysterious Black "tried to lure Scaliger into the marsh, failed, and disappeared, leaving [Scaliger] confirmed in his contempt for the devil and all his works."⁹⁶ According to Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, from the sixteenth century on, Mexicans used the term "mandinga" as a popular designation for the devil.⁹⁷ The etching from the Venice haggada elicits the impossibility of cleanly segregating Sephardic and Ashkenazic discourse; the book presented in the margins an abridged version of Abravanel's commentary to the Passover service and haggada (with an introduction by R. Yehuda Aryeh of Modena), but also featured a translation of the main text into Yiddish.

KUSHITES AS A PHILOSOPHICAL LOCUS

Blackness and Blacks continued to represent moral and cultural imperfection in ways showing great continuity between Jewish and non-Jewish discourses. A fifteenth-century Ladino translation of the *Sefer ha-Kuzari* of Yehuda ha-Levi updated only the geographical terminology in the description of low Kushite capacities (1:1), replacing "Kushite" with "a Guinea man, of the inhabitants of the center of his land / vn onbre guineo delos morantes enel çentro de su tierra."⁹⁸ Yehuda Moscato (ca. 1530–ca. 1593), one of the most important Italian rabbis, authors, and preachers, wrote a commentary to ha-Levi's *Kuzari*. Within, Moscato reiterated ha-Levi's philosophical anti-Blackness:

The Kushite does not have the preparedness [by nature] to receive wisdom. . . . And remember that the teacher [Rambam] included these Kushites with the peoples who do not have religion, neither by way of investigation nor by way of tradition. For thus he wrote in the third part [of the *Guide to the Perplexed*], chapter 51: "the status of these is like that of animals who do not speak, and to me they are not of the rank of humans, and their rank among the beings is below that of the human but above that of the monkey, since the outward form and appearance of the human has reached them and their cognition is greater than that of the monkey." Until here [are his words].⁹⁹

In section 1:27, ha-Levi had denied that the Torah was obligatory on all humankind because all people(s) had been created by God, but rather only on the Jews, whose special history – he cited the redemption from Egypt – linked them alone with God. For the totality of humankind ha-Levi had employed the merism "the white and the black," but not in a necessarily ethnographically specific sense. Moscato clarified this: "[F]or the black is the Kushite, who is not

prepared for anything more than the reception of the form of the human, etc., as previously mentioned in [section] 1."¹⁰⁰

Shlomo Molkho, a Portuguese New Christian originally named Diogo Pires, became a fervent Jew after meeting the self-proclaimed prince of the lost ten tribes, David ha-Reuveni, in 1523. Leaving Portugal, within a short time Molkho not only mastered Hebrew and rabbinic sources but also studied with some of the leading kabbalists of Saloniki. A Salonikan press issued a book of his kabbalistic and messianic sermons already in 1529.¹⁰¹ These opened with a discussion of the mystical significance of Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden, and the four rivers flowing therefrom. The second river, Gihon, was said to surround the entire land of Kush (Gen. 2:13). Molkho played on one of the more prevalent meanings of blackness in immediately commenting that "these are people who are black from sins." Although he referenced Song of Songs 1:6, Molkho/Pires's understanding that the blackness of Kushites signified (their) sinfulness could have come equally from Jewish or non-Jewish precedents, exegetical or ethnographic.¹⁰²

Many early modern Jewish authors proffered similar views. Moshe Alsheikh (d. after 1593; Constantinople, Safed), basing his opinions on rabbinic notions that the sins or good deeds of a person weave themselves into postmortem clothes for the soul, analogized the Kushite in Jeremiah 13:23 to a person who was such a complete sinner that his "whole body would wear a foreign, black-as-a-raven garment, from all the sins he committed with all his limbs."¹⁰³ Such usages posed a perfect fit with the continued valorization of the color white and denigration of the color black. In a thin moral tract discussing the moral qualities, R. Leone da Modena allegorized toil or sorrow, with the idea of melancholia in mind, by means of the black raven, who barely recognizes and will not feed her chicks until their whiteness turns into blackness.¹⁰⁴ Presenting an oft-repeated trope, one Ashkenazic rabbi sermonized in 1695 from the Aramaic translation of Song of Songs 5:11 that "one who learns Torah is beautiful and white. This is [the meaning of] 'his locks are wavy.' But one who does not learn Torah [he is/his locks are] 'black as a raven.'"¹⁰⁵

Before providing a summary and explanation of the phenomenological differences between Jewish and non-Jewish discourses throughout the long seventeenth century, it is necessary to conclude this survey with an exploration of the final major trope relating to Blacks, the biblical curse of Ham. This comprises the subject of the next chapter, at whose end I will address the overall significance of the material covered in Chapters 4 through 6.

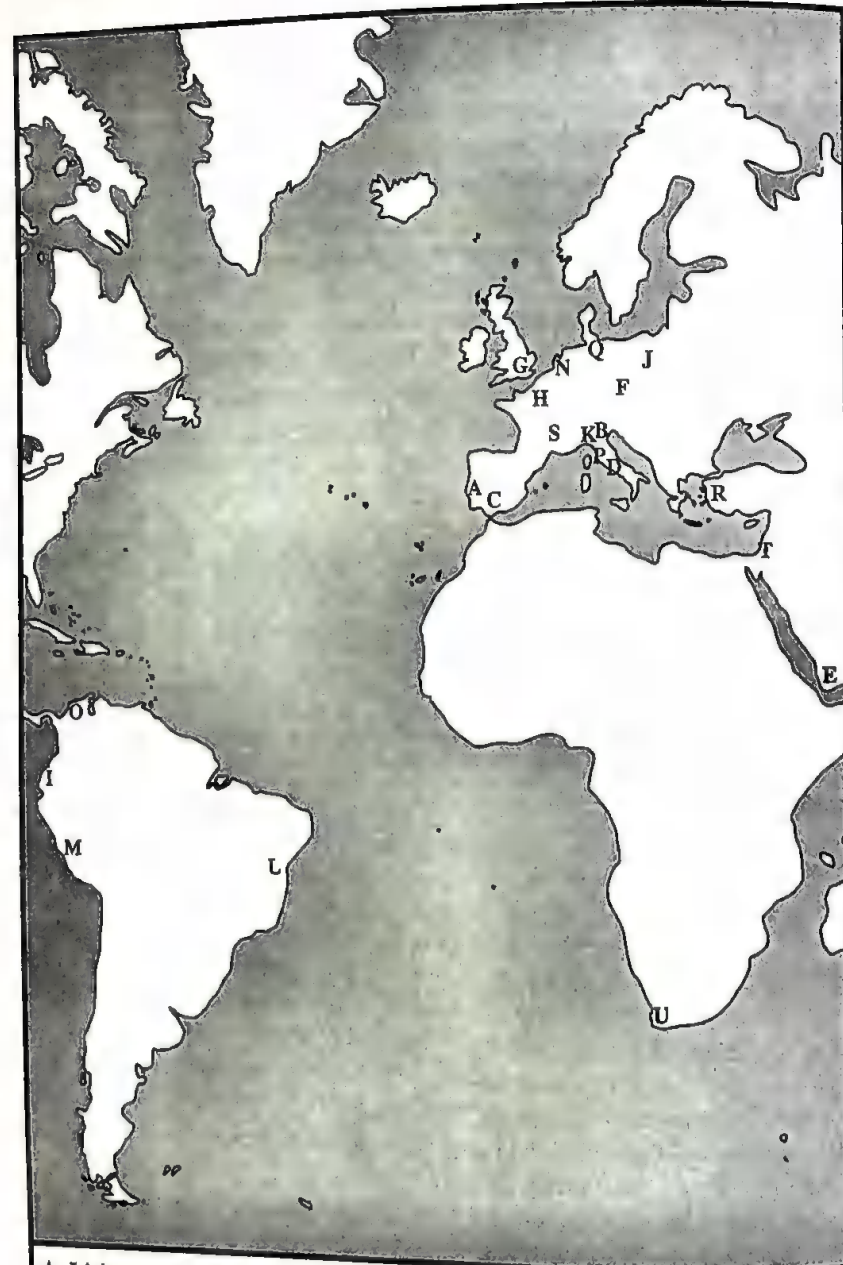
The Curse of Ham

Explorations in Cross-Cultural Genealogy

Continuing with the topic of the last two chapters, I will now widen the lens somewhat, taking in Jewish, Catholic, as well as Protestant authors from Europe who mention a curse of Ham as initiating either Black servitude or human Blackness. The analysis now transpires even more strongly under the sign of colonialism and the slave trade, though the Jewish relationship to these forces often remains opaque in the sources.¹ I make no pretense of tackling the entire range of early modern theorizing leveled at the twin problems of human Blackness and Black servitude, but am only teasing out the efforts to apply the biblical curse of Noah to these problems. Likewise, I make no attempt to track the curse's significant history after 1700.²

We now know enough references to Ham, color, a curse, and slavery between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries to do more than present their variety or consensus as reflective of a "general attitude." Taking a page from Franco Moretti's thought-provoking *Atlas of the European Novel*,³ I have literally mapped out the textual trajectory of the curse of Ham during these centuries of the solidification and globalization of the trade in African slaves (Map 1). This cartographic method will enable us to ask some more penetrating questions about the early modern functions and methods of this set of statements centering on Ham, including the relationship between Jewish and Christian citations.

Some Black and Christian scholars have laid the blame for the curse of Ham at the feet of Jewish biblical interpretations. Joseph R. Washington, Jr., and Winthrop Jordan repeatedly hinted and argued that the idea of the accursedness of Blackness in English culture derived from contact with Jews and Jewish midrash.⁴ French cultural dominance under the Normans helped promulgate Jewish views in England, wrote Washington, since ecclesiastical and political leaders (the Victorines) "accepted the Jewish literal interpretation of the Old Testament," that is, they followed "the Jews and Josephus rather than Bede," but they "were not alone in their intellectual traffic with the rabbis. . . . Throughout



A. Lisbon: 1, 24; B. Venice: 2, 45; C. Seville: 3, 5, 13, 23; D. Rome (?): 4, 16;
E. Yemen: 6; F. Prague: 7; G. London: 8, 14, 15, 17, 19, 20, 21, 33, 34, 35, 39;
H. Paris (?): 9, 36; I. Quito: 10; J. Poland: 11, 45; K. Mantua: 12; L. Bahia:
18, 26, 44; M. Lima: 25, 30; N. The Netherlands: 27, 31, 32, 37, 40;
O. Cartagena: 28; P. Livorno: 29; Q. Kiel: 38; R. Izmir: 41; S. Lyon: 42;
T. Safed: 43; U. Cape Town: 46

MAP 1. Authors Who Cite the Curse of Ham as an Explanation for the Servitude of Blacks and/or for the Cause of Human Blackness (1400-1700)

S = slavery; B = Blackness; G = genealogy of Blacks; these indicate the reasons for which the curse or Hamitic genealogy was cited by the author. Sources in brackets cited the curse
■ an explanation for slavery in general.

1. Gomes Eannes de Zurara, *Crónica de Guiné* (1453) (S)
2. Yitshak Abravanel (ca. 1507) (SB)
3. [Juan López de Palacios Rubios, *De las Islas del mar Océano* (1512-14)]
4. Juan Leo Africano (al-Hasan ben Muḥammad al-Wazzan al-Fasi), *In Descriptiones Africa* (1550) (G)
5. Francisco López de Gómara, *Historia General de las Indias* (1555) (S)
6. Yemenite MS. B.T. Sanhedrin (sixteenth century) (B)
7. Tycho Brahe, *Astronomiae instauratae progymnasmata* (1574) (B)
8. George Best, *A True Discourse* (1578) (B)
9. Gilbert Genebrard, *Chronographiae Libri Quator* (1580) (S)
10. Miguel Cabello de Balboa, *Mislanea Antártica* (completed in 1586) (G)
11. Ya'akov b. Yitshak of Janowa, *Tsenah u-Renah* (ca. 1600) (SB)
12. Antonio Possevino, *Bibliotheca selecta de ratione studiorum* (1607 [1603?]) (SB)
13. Juan de Torquemada, *Monarquía indiana* (1615 [finished prior to 1612]) (SB)
14. [Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedy of Mariam* (1613)]
15. Thomas Cooper, *The Blessing of Japheth* (1615) (S)
16. Agostino Tornielli, *Annales sacri, et ex profanis praecipui* (1611) (B)
17. George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey* (1615) (S)
18. (Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão,) *Dialogues of the Great Things of Brazil* (1618) (BS)
19. Richard Jobson, *The Golden Trade* (1623) (GS)
20. John Weemse, *The Portraiture of the Image of God in Man* (1627) (S)
21. [Sir Edward Coke, *Institutes of the Laws of England* (1628) (S)]
22. Yoshiyahu b. Yosef Pinto, *Sefer Kesef Mezuḳak* (1628) (BS)
23. Juan de Solórzano Pereira, *Política indiana* (1629-39) (BS)
24. Anon., "Explicação Porque são os Negros Negros" (after 1629) (BS)
25. Buenaventura de Salinas y Córdova, *Memorial de las historias del Nuevo Mundo Pini* (1630) (BS)
26. Antonio Vieira, "Sermão prégado a uma confraria de escravos" (1630s?) (G)
27. [Godefrid Udemans, *Tgeestelyck Roer Van't Coopmans Schip* (1638) (S)]
28. Alonso de Sandoval, *De Instauranda Aethiopum Salute* (1647) (S)
29. Agostino Paoletti da Mont'Alcino (1640s, 1650s?) (B) - identified too late for inclusion
30. Avraham b. Shmuel Gedalya, *Brit Avraham* (1650-57) (BS)
31. Antonio Rodríguez de León Pinelo, *El paraíso en el Nuevo Mundo* (1656) (BS)
32. Johan Picardt, *Antiquiteiten* (1660) (S)
33. Georg Horn, *Arca Noae, sive historia imperiorum et regnorum* (1666) (B)
34. Peter Heylyn, *Cosmographie* (1666) (B)
35. [John Milton, *Paradise Lost* (1667)]
36. Matthew Poole, *Synopsis criticorum aliorumque scripturae interpretum* (1669-76) (S)
37. Louis Moreau de Chambonneau, *Traité de l'origine des nègres du Sénégal* (between 1673 and 1677) (B)
38. John Price, *Beschrijvinge van Guiana* (1676) (S)
39. Jean-Louis Hanneman, *Curiosum Scrutinium nigredinis posterorum Cham i.e. Aethiopum* (1677) (BS)

39. Thomas Herbert, *Some Years Travels into Divers Parts of Africa, and Asia the Great* (1677 [based on a voyage of 1626]) (G)
40. [Herman Witsius, *De Oeconomia foederum Dei cum hominibus* (1677) (S)]
41. Yosef b. Eliahu Hazan, *Ein Yosef* (1680)
42. A. Pherotee de la Croix, *Relation universelle de l'Afrique ancienne et moderne* (1688) (G)
43. Mordehai ha-Cohen, *Sifte Cohen* (1690) (SB)
44. Jorge Benci, *Economia cristã dos senhores no governo dos escravos* (1700) (S)
45. Moshe Nirel ha-Cohen, *Sefer Birhat Tov* (1711 [written before 1700]) (SB)
46. 1703 Dutch Church in South Africa ref. to the baptism of "one of Ham's unfortunate African progeny" (G)

the Middle Ages and beyond Christians conferred with rabbis."⁵ Medieval European Christian romanticizations of Prester John and Christian Ethiopians countered "the disesteem in which they were held by the Jewish biblical legends and popular mind."⁶ Early modern English elites defended their policies through the use of the Bible, a use "presaged by the elite friars and Catholic scholars who . . . were instructed by Jewish rabbis."⁷ English scholars, "and in turn the clergymen and laymen who followed them, solicited guidance from Jewish scholars and in the course of studying Jewish interpretations of the Scriptures learned the traditions which, where they did not conflict with their own theological persuasion . . . often became authoritative." These Englishmen "were inordinately impressed by the varied Jewish explanations of the Genesis saga wherein Noah's son Ham (or variously his son or grandson Canaan) was black and the progenitor of black people."⁸ Finally, the garbled culmination:

The Jewish graphic account of the origin of a people cursed in their blackness and condemned to slavery, Bible-oriented Englishmen discovered, became the conduits of, and were conditioned by this religious exposition in their formative years. The thrust of these specifications, rather than the literal story itself, became their own unshakable belief unaltered by reason, political or economic necessity.⁹

It is not coincidental that in the language of Christian author Washington, this blind, stubborn anti-Black racism, stemming from the Jews, reiterates the traditional theological blindness and stubbornness of the Jews. But its actual passing from Judaism to Christianity need not be proven, since it was "the thrust" rather than "the literal story" that bears a Jewish taint. Thence follows an account of Jewish anti-Black passages from the Bible straight to the Zohar.

For Washington, Jewish influence and a "Jewish curse of Ham" appeared even where none existed. Discussing Francis Bacon's work *The New Atlantis* – the *Novum Organum* (1620) – he cited the following passage, said by a Jewish merchant in praise of Bacon's exemplary nation:

I remember I have read in one of your European books, of an holy hermit amongst you that desired to see the spirit of Fornication and there appeared to him a little

foul ugly Aethiop. But if he had desired to see the Spirit of Chastity of Bensalem, it would have appeared to him in the likeness of a fair beautiful Cherubin.¹⁰

"Clearly," commented Washington, "the humanist Bacon draws upon the Jewish tradition of Ham" (!), despite the author's immediate acknowledgment that the direct source resides in "the Christian tradition where in the *Acts of Peter* there appears to Marcellus in his dream a demon 'in sight like an Ethiopian . . . altogether black and filthy.'"¹¹ As Washington should have known or knew but chose to overlook, Bacon's passage did not reflect any Jewish influence (and the previous chapters show how much more prevalent demonic Blacks were in Christian discourse). Rather, Bacon, in the manner of a good Protestant Herodotus, used here a despised Other, a Jewish merchant, to pose provocative questions about *Christian* European behavior: "in one of *your* European books," books with which the educated Christian Bacon no doubt was familiar.

Seeing a Jewish curse of Ham behind every English notion of Black accursedness will not do. Obviously, the Jewish Torah and its interpretation served as one of the bases for the Christian New Testament and its interpretation since the beginnings of Christianity. Thus, Washington's desperate reaching back to the early medieval world in an effort to find Jewish influence bears a peculiar flagrancy. If one looks carefully, the explicit citation of Jewish authors remains extremely rare in early modern writings (in contrast to those of our own century) when in the discursive region of slavery and Ham. If these authors wanted to cite Ham as a Jewish curse they would have; no power opposed the curse of Ham as an idea, and no discomfort over sourcing Jewish authorities plagued them. Instead, they for the most part cited earlier *Christian* authorities. Some, of course, did indeed cite Jewish authorities. But overall, the curse of Ham seems to comprise a case of intra-Christian discursive influence. The Jewish Bible having been claimed as a Christian text already long before the medieval period, early modern Christian authorities continued to make use of it as a *component of the Christian canon*. The Jewish exegetical tradition did gain more acceptance and currency with the rise of humanism and Protestantism, while, as Benjamin Braude showed, the new Protestant canonization of the Bible brought its influence even more to the center of interdisciplinary hermeneutics in northern Europe.¹² But the curse of Ham had become integrated into Christian discourse long before these reformations.

The unfolding of the curse of Ham also transpired on another field of discourse perhaps more important, the intellectual underwriting of European colonial endeavors. The newer players learned from those who already had experience. Gesa Mackenthun correctly noted how Spain acted less as a rival than as a "precursor and model of English colonial action and ideology."¹³ The Dutch and English absorption of Portuguese navigational and cartographic

knowledge has long been acknowledged.¹⁴ Much of the ambivalent Iberian approach to Blacks derived from earlier Muslim, Christian, and, yes, Jewish attitudes. But the early modern trajectory of the various curses on Ham owes more to these reworked intra-Christian disseminations of a new "racialized" ruling ideology than to any Jewish origins. This will be seen readily in my discussion to follow. The first order of business, then, is to survey the relevant Jewish citations.

HAM IN JEWISH TEXTS

Any discussion must begin with acknowledgment of the hermeneutic problem that although Ham was *not* universally considered to be Black, we are unable to say whether the great majority of authors who did not specify his Blackness nonetheless assumed it. This glaring suspension of judgment often forces us to attempt to align mere hints, contiguities, similarities. Only with great rarity was the notion of a curse on Ham explicitly connected to Blacks in Jewish discourse during this era.

The overwhelming majority of exegetes from the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries made no comment whatsoever on Noah's cursing of Ham or Kena'an when glossing the *parsha* in which it appears.¹⁵ Of the minority who did treat the notorious biblical incident, many repeated, often verbatim, earlier *midrashim* that glossed the somewhat confused and cryptic biblical account: that Ham had sex with or castrated his father Noah, the latter act preventing him from having a fourth son (first proposed in B.T. Sanhedrin 70a).¹⁶ Some exegetes held that Noah's curse – servitude – fell on both Kena'an and Ham.¹⁷ Most, however, focused this curse of servitude, if not the narrative wrath as a whole, squarely on Kena'an, not on Ham, even if they had negative things to say about Ham.¹⁸ The servitude entailed in this curse was often historically circumscribed, however, and made to pertain to the conquest of the land of Kena'an by the Israelites. Shem Tov ibn Shem Tov (fifteenth century; Spain), for example, buttressed his opinion on the curse's provenance by bringing in as historical proof the fact that the descendants of Kena'an "were bearers of water and cutters of trees for the priests," referring to the Temple slaves known as *Netinim* mentioned in the Bible.¹⁹ Few had Noah's curse of servitude fall on Ham and his progeny as a whole rather than on Kena'an.²⁰ Eliezer Ashkenazi (1513–1586; Salonika, Egypt, Famagusta, Venice, Poznan, Cracow) restated Ibn Ezra's refutation of the possibility that all of Ham's sons were cursed, writing explicitly that Ham was not cursed, so that the rest of his descendants, through Kush, Phut, and Egypt, should not be so burdened, especially since, unlike Kena'an, these three sons possessed good traits.²¹ Many commentators reiterated the midrashic explanation that Ham could not be cursed because he had the

protection of God's blessing on leaving the ark.²² A few repeated the midrash that Ham had also, while still on the ark, had sex, which was forbidden or which should have been abandoned in deference to the severity of the occasion of world catastrophe.²³

Most Jewish commentators and texts agreed on Ham's evil character, which usually got passed on to his descendants. According to Moshe [b. Ya'akov] Albelda (1500–before 1583; Greece, Albania), the descendants of Ham are "evil and sinners like him."²⁴ Kena'an was "perverse like his father," according to Menasseh Ben Israel's gloss to Genesis 9:20 in his 1655 translation of the *Humash*.²⁵ Rabbi Yehudah b. Bezalel Löw of Prague wrote: "And Ham also was ready to distance himself from other creatures [by engaging in sex in the ark, which was against the natural order of abstaining during a time of loss to life] as happened to him afterwards, for his seed was cursed and distanced from human beings."²⁶ In his supercommentary to Rashi, Löw asserted that the descendants of Noah's sons took after their patronymic ancestors, with those of Ham being like him, "uncoverers of nakedness and debased bodily."²⁷ Löw referred in his *Gevurot ha-Shem*, to "the ruined/rotten seed of Ham / זרע חם המקולקל."²⁸

Several fifteenth-century Iberian Jewish writers wrote negatively about Ham, yet nowhere made an explicit link to Blacks or Blackness. Some even penned a qualified homage to this usually maligned son of Noah. The late fifteenth-century Abraham Saba, a rabbi in Spain before he joined the exiles to North Africa, explained the immediate juxtaposition of the Bible's calling Noah perfect and its listing of his three sons (Gen. 6:9) by melding the attributes of the three sons. Noah

gave birth to three sons, pillars of the world, for from them "spread out all the land" [Gen. 10:1], and they are three things upon which the world stands: law/severity, truth and peace, as explained above when it [the Bible] says "And Noah gave birth to Shem, Ham and Yaphet" [Gen. 6:10]. And Ham, because he was in the grip of the quality of law/severity, did what he did, but for all that he is necessary for the existence of the world.²⁹

Saba's treatment of Ham elsewhere is not exactly kind. He wrote that the Bible relates Ham's genealogy only "to show that all the descendants of Ham were evildoers and therefore Nimrod went out from Kush [cf. Gen. 10:8], a complete evildoer like Kena'an."³⁰ Nowhere, however, does Saba reference Blackness or servitude. His relatively restrained language about Ham – in the first quotation positively glossed in the context of an explication of Noah's perfection as diversity in balance – might even represent a quiet protest against the excessive condemnation of Ham and his progeny.

Saba's elusive characterization of Ham can be complemented by means of the writings of others. According to the Spanish Rabbi Yitshak Arama (1420–1494;

Zamora, Calatayud), in his famous collection of long philosophical sermons following the parshi'ot, *Akeidat Yitshak*, Shem held "the portion of the intellect, which pursues the absolute good."³¹ Yefet "is the matter of the useful in itself." Ham "is the youngest in rank [i.e., the lowest, the least], his name testifies about him that he is filling the place of Kayin [Cain], whose heart is passionate and more[;] he got mixed up with the animal desires." Clearly, Arama's schema closely followed Aristotelian principles. It also closely paralleled Abravanel's configuration.³²

Although Ham signified a source of sexual depravity, sexual heat, or passion, a positive view of passion and heat coexisted with a negative attitude in Jewish and non-Jewish discourse. Human existence itself depended on cosmic heat or passion, in the view of the fifteenth-century rabbi and leader of the Lisbon Jewish community, Yosef b. Avraham Hayyun: "for fire is life for this world because through it the climes intermingle and existant things come into being, and human life depends on moisture and heat, as do the rest of the creatures."³³ For this reason, the fourteenth-century Zarza had mitigated the harshness directed at Ham:

And that his father [Noah] did not curse him but cursed his son, this was because this force [heat/passion] is necessary for humans, to sustain them. For there will be no mixture except in/with the heat of cooking. And also it is the cause of the continuance of the human species. And therefore it is not fitting to curse him [Ham/passion] but rather to curse the bad offspring who come from him. And therefore he cursed Kena'an who is the offspring.³⁴

Its necessity notwithstanding, sex needed to be controlled, lest its negative potential overpower the positive:

[A]nd he [Noah] said that he [Kena'an/passion] will be a slave of slaves to his brothers, an allusion to his being the most debased of all the other forces, as Aristotle said that it [passion] is a shame to us (until here is his [al-Konstantini's] language). And perhaps the rabbis, may their memory be for a blessing, in saying that he [Ham] castrated him [Noah] etc., hinted at what I have written, and [this is] enough for one who understands.³⁵

Arama agreed: "[H]e [Noah] said 'cursed is Kena'an, a slave of slaves will he be to his brothers' because the force associated with him [i.e., passion, lust] is necessary for human life but it is fitting that he [Kena'an/the force of passion] be dominated like a slave, serving the work of his brothers."³⁶ Again, though ultimately a negative evaluation of Ham, Arama portrayed the necessity of that which he represented, reserving the main animus for Kena'an. These more tolerant statements reflect a humanist, perhaps Renaissance, reevaluation of the panoply of human drives.

The most significant question remains whether even in such citations Ham represented Black Africans. Not one of these passages referred, explicitly or implicitly, to Blacks. Only if one argues from silence can all mentions of Ham be said to have had Blacks in mind, but this would be completely unwarranted. A mere handful of commentators referred to those *midrashim* that raised the issue of Blackness or alluded to Africa.³⁷ Non-Jewish discourses also failed to definitively label Ham as Black until perhaps the late sixteenth century, if not later. The same 1493 world map asserting that Africa fell to Cam's lot depicted him in one corner with the same physiognomic features as Sem and Iaphet in two of the other corners: long beard, hook nose, and decidedly "European" appearance.³⁸ With the rise of a slave system dependent on the labor of one kind of human being, Black, the usefulness of more concretely linking Ham, Blackness, and servitude through a curse increased. We will return to this theme. The curse of Ham as an etiology or rationalization for Black slavery served little purpose in Jewish discourse. Part of the reason for this derived from the fact that Jewish discourse needed no justification for the enslavement of non-Jews. The acquisition of slaves from among the surrounding nations and conquered natives is explicitly directed in Leviticus 25:44-46 (treated toward the end of this chapter).

Ham was infrequently linked explicitly to Blacks or even Africa in the Jewish discourse of the medieval era, though by the early modern epoch not as infrequently as recent Jewish scholarship has implied. Still, if Ham alluded to Blacks only where so specified by the author, Ham's Blackness continued to be the claim of a small minority. As cited in Chapter 1, Abravanel, in his exegesis of Genesis 10, linked Asia and Shem, Africa and Ham, and Europe and Yefet. A good number of Jewish writers after Abravanel also divided the continents between Noah's three sons, despite the increasingly obvious mismatch between numbers. Avraham Farisol agreed in his treatise on geography and eschatology that Ham and Africa should be equated, and buttressed this association by bringing up the fact that Kush, known to be one of Ham's sons, could be found in Africa.³⁹ Farisol cited the Latin version of Josephus and Jacopo Filippo Foresti's *Supplementum supplementi cronicarum* (Venice, 1483) as sources for this information.⁴⁰ Eliahu [b. Asher] ha-Levi Ashkenazi (1468/9-1549), known also as Elijah Levita, who taught Sebastien Münster and Cardinal Egidius da Viterbo, implied the Noahide connection in his influential 1541 lexicon of Aramaic. Among other citations to biblical verses brought to clarify the Aramaic term for Africa, *Afrak*, he wrote: "And this is one of the three parts of the world," for Africa, *Afrak*, he wrote: "And this is one of the three parts of the world," with a marginal listing of his references including Genesis 10.⁴¹ Samuel Usque (d. ca. 1557) presented the tripartite scheme.⁴² Ishac Aboab da Fonseca, who had resided in Brazil, agreed with this Noahide partition.⁴³ Moseh de Ishac Dias similarly stated that "Ham takes the portion of Africa" in his *Meditaciones sobre la*

in the impossibility of strict conceptual segregation, which one assumes the author understood, if not intended.⁵⁷ Cohen's remarks offer one of the very few unqualified positive presentations of Ham, who was included with his brothers among the "children of grace/beauty."⁵⁸ As is true for the majority of these rabbinic commentators who cited a curse on Ham and/or Blacks, we know too little about Cohen to say anything about possible connections to the institutions of slavery or colonialism, or about possible motivations in writing one way or another about Ham.⁵⁹ Comparing these Jewish citations with those from Catholic and Protestant authors will enable us to inquire into the similarities and differences between their invocation in the various religious discourses.

HAM IN CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT, CONTINENTAL AND COLONIAL DISCOURSE

The Map 1 depiction of the trajectory of citations to a curse of Ham generates certain themes more easily discernible than through purely verbal recitation. On this map I have placed every citation to a curse of Ham pertaining to Blacks between 1400 and 1700. No doubt more could be added.⁶⁰ On it I have situated the works in which the citations appear according to the place of composition, and where this was not possible, according to place of publication. The arbitrariness inherent in the tabulation, dating, situating, and ordering of such a set of citations cannot be avoided, but the import of their concatenation comes through nonetheless. A literary sociology of early modern instances of Ham reveals much. The trajectory of citations to a curse on Ham as a justification for the enslavement of Blacks or for their Blackness follows closely the development of the enslavement of Blacks among the various national powers of Western Europe, beginning in Portugal, Spain, and Italy and moving northward to England and The Netherlands. Robin Blackburn was not entirely correct in stating that "Protestant reliance on the story [of Noah's curse] seems to have been greater than that of Catholic writers."⁶¹ Asking questions about the literary trajectory of Ham's accursedness from a generic point of view enables us to sharpen our appreciation of this semiotic material's uses and migration.

The genealogy of the curse of Ham was already stated at the onset of the Portuguese voyages of exploration and slaving and has been often quoted. In his narrative of the "discovery" and conquest of Guinea, Gomes Eanes da Zurara related the function of the curse of Cam in its "indigenous" setting, as projected by the Christian chronicler. Eanes da Zurara's mention comes in his description of the first Black slaves taken by the young nobleman Antão Gonçalves. These slaves came to the Portuguese as a ransom for a Muslim nobleman whom the Portuguese had earlier captured. Eanes da Zurara's presentation of the curse

is starkly similar to the manner in which it is later cited by other European writers:

And here you must note that these blacks, though they were Moors like the others, were nonetheless slaves [*servos*] of these by ancient custom, which I believe to be by the curse which after the flood Noé threw on his son Cam,⁶² by which he cursed him, that his descendants should be subject to all the other peoples of the world, from whom [Cam] these [Blacks] descend, following what was written by the archbishop D. Rodrigo of Toledo and also Josephus, in the book of the Antiquities of the Jews and even Walter, with other authors who spoke of the generations of Noé after the exit from the ark.⁶³

Eanes da Zurara correctly understood that these Blacks were enslaved by the more northerly Islamicized Africans according to long-standing local custom. No doubt the Portuguese travelers, who landed far from their hoped-for destination at the land of Prester John, met Arabic travelers who shared the views of Ibn Battuta dismissing the Black inhabitants of the forested sub-Saharan western shores as pagans and cannibals.⁶⁴ Yet Eanes da Zurara, the chronicler officially commissioned by D. Afonso V to record the achievements of Prince Henrique, inserted his own understanding of the justification for the enslavement of Blacks, as taken from the Christian and Jewish authorities with which he was familiar as an educated Christian.⁶⁵

According to the notes of Eanes da Zurara's English translators, Beazley and Prestage, the cited archbishop is Rodrigo Jiménez de Rada (1170–1247). The identity of "Walter / Gualtero" is unclear. It might be the English Aristotelian thinker Walter Burley (1275–1345?).⁶⁶ But it could be Gualterus Tarvannensis (twelfth century), Walter of Châtillon, called Walter of Lille (thirteenth century) or even Walter of Hemingburgh or Hemingford (fourteenth century).⁶⁷ No mention of any curse appears in Jiménez de Rada's *De Rebus hispanie* or his *Historia arabum*, whose third chapter reminded readers of the ancient attainments of Christianity in Ethiopia.⁶⁸ His *Breviarium historie catholice* retold in a straightforward way the material from Genesis 9:18–29, repeating the vagueness of the original: Noah "maledixit Cham in filio . . . Maledictus puer Chanaan, servus servorum erit fratribus suis." Jiménez de Rada followed Isidor in connecting the four sons of Cham with various African peoples, so it is possible that Eanes da Zurara simply transposed the curse onto Black Africans. Retelling Leviticus 18:1–7, Jiménez de Rada recast the source's command to avoid sexual turpitude, lest "we incur the curse of Cham."⁶⁹ According to the standard Greek *Jewish Antiquities* of Josephus – Eanes da Zurara probably referred to one of the many quite different Latin versions – of Cham's descendants, only those of Canaan bore the curse.⁷⁰ As always, however, the accuracy of a quotation is of less importance than its use-value.⁷¹ Though enemies by faith, the "nobility" shared

by Christian and Muslim elites permitted their sharing justifications for ruling over populations deemed worthy of subjugation. As Eanes da Zurara narrated shortly after this scene, the Black slaves were not Muslims but pagans.⁷²

Later examples repeated the patterns found in Eanes da Zurara. Francisco López de Gómara, justifying the servitude of the American natives (ca. 1555), cited Augustine and Chrisostom for the idea of slavery as a proper castigation for sin. He found that the sin of Cam against his father was less severe than the sins of these Indians against God, yet the descendants of the former had been cursed into slavery.⁷³ The French humanist historian François Belleforest, writing circa 1570, turned to the biblical Cham to describe the moral degeneracy and religious ignorance of his descendants. Belleforest referred to them as a cursed race, but did not explicitly state that their religious degeneracy stemmed from the curse. The one source he cited was the Hellenized Babylonian priest Berosus (third century B.C.E.).⁷⁴ The Benedictine Gilbert Genebrard, professor of Hebrew at the College of France in Paris, adduced from the Bible and unnamed sources the idea that Cham "was subjected to the misfortune of slavery," a curse that fell on "the Canaanites and many peoples of Africa [who are] subject to perpetual servitude to the Europeans and Asians."⁷⁵ Genebrard explicitly raised a Jewish source – "Hebrew sages," via R. Levi, that is, the biblical commentary of R. Levi b. Gerson – not for the linkage between Cham and Blacks but for the exegesis stating that Cham castrated his father to prevent additional sibling competitors.⁷⁶ Antonio Possevino (ca. 1533–1611), a Jesuit of Mantua, not a Hebraist, cited Genebrard repeatedly when making various assertions about the descendants of Chus cursed in both servitude and Blackness. Possevino referred explicitly to "Hebrew tradition," though again through Genebrard, for the notion that Ham was born, as were his brothers, of a White father, but that "Chus – or at least his descendants – was of a dark color as a manifest proof of his father's crime."⁷⁷

The Franciscan Juan de Torquemada, who finished his *Monarquia indiana* prior to 1612, emphasized the curse of Can in his explanation of slavery's origin, basing himself on Chrisostom, Augustine, Paul (Rom. 5), Genesis 9, and Leviticus 25.⁷⁸ A mid-seventeenth-century three-page Portuguese manuscript, "Explanation of Why Blacks Are Black," most probably the exercise of a law student, found the answer to its title's question in the curse of Cham.⁷⁹ As sources, the unknown author cited Genesis 10 and the Paralipomenon, that is, 1 and 2 Chronicles as called by the Catholic Church. His authority for the idea that not Cham alone but his descendants also merited punishment for his crime consisted of "Abulense," that is, the bishop of Avila, Alfonso de Madrigal, cited in Chapter 1 as el Tostado, but also known as El Abulense. According to the unknown Portuguese jurist, the biblical curse was applied to both C(h)anaan's offspring – the Israelites destroyed them and took their

land – as well as all of Cham's descendants, "and today the blacks, like cattle, are branded."⁸⁰ To support this latter homology, the anonymous Portuguese author brought forward Theofilo Raymundo and a work by Herman Hugo (1588–1629) on the origin of writing and literature, from which the author seems merely to have found some pertinent classical quotations.⁸¹ Elaborating examples of classical precedents for the inhuman treatment of slaves whose humanity is unclear, the Portuguese author cited Florus, Juvenal, Petronius, Phabo, Clement of Alexandria, Martial, and Apuleius, among others. The Jesuit Alonso de Sandoval, who lived and preached in Cartagena de las Indias, cited Noah's curse of Can among other theories explaining the servitude and Blackness of Ethiopians. His sources consisted of Augustine, Chrisostom, and Ambrose.⁸² Epifanio de Moirans, in his 1682 critique of African slavery, *Servi liberi seu naturalis mancipiorum libertatis iusta defensio*, dismissed the curse of Cam as a justification. Citing only biblical proof texts, he aimed his words squarely at those Christians who "have occupied the place of the children of Sem," that is, who incorrectly wielded obsolete biblical prognostications as if they applied to them.⁸³

Little distinguished Protestant from Catholic citations other than that the Iberians tended not to cite Protestants, especially Hebraists. Following the biblical story in general about the flood, Samuel Purchas cited Philo of Alexandria for the fact that in "*Cham & his posteritie we see the authors of ruine*" and the legend of Saturn for the act "for which *Cham* was cursed." Philo comprised a source beloved by Christian authors, but practically never mentioned by rabbinic authorities. On the other hand, it was through Canaan and his descendants that idolatry was introduced and spread. When connecting Cham with deviant sexuality Purchas cited Berosus.⁸⁴ Not once did Purchas mention Blackness. The English traveler Richard Jobson cited the curse of Ham as the reason that the Mandingos "are furnisht with such members as are after a sort burthen-some unto them." Their monstrous sexuality, here made literal, Jobson derived from "our holy Scripture," though the curse's provenance "by Scholemen hath been disputed."⁸⁵ These "schoolmen" were doubtlessly Christians to Jobson's mind.

The Middle Eastern travelogue of George Sandys (1577–1643) comprises a fascinating example of the absence of direct Jewish sources. He cited the curse of Cham as the explicit and sole cause for human Blackness, specifically writing of Cham as the reason of their "Seed, nor heat of the Climate: Nor that it derives neither from 'reason of their Seed, nor heat of the Climate: Nor of the Soyle, as some haue supposed,' since Blacks living in other climes never 'grow to better complexion.'"⁸⁶ Sandys raised this topic in his narrative after he saw the Black slaves of the merchants with whom he journeyed from Cairo to Gaza on pilgrimage. Immediately preceding his disquisition on the methods of enslaving Blacks and the reason for their Blackness, he mentioned that some

Jews also appeared in the entourage. The passage is worth quoting:

Amongst vs were diuers *Jewish* women: in the extremity of their age vndertaking so wearisome a iourney, onely to die at *Jerusalem*, bearing along with them the bones of their Parents, Husbands, Children, and Kinsfolke; as they doe from all other parts where they can conueniently. The Merchants brought with them many *Negros*; not the worst of their Merchandizes. These they buy of their Parents, some thirty days iourney aboue, and on the West side of the [Nile] Riuer. As the wealth of others consists in multitudes of cattell; so theirs in the multitude of their children, whom they part from with as little passion; neuer after to be seene or heard of: regarding more the price then condition of their slavery. These are descended of *Chus*, the Sonne of cursed *Cham*; as are all of that complexion.⁸⁷

The narrative proximity, indeed contiguity, of these Jewish women and Black slaves introduced a useful but unlabeled contrast. It is of course possible, though this is entirely speculative, that Sandys learned of the curse from these Jewish women. If he did, he suppressed acknowledgment of his source, leaving it only to be inferred from a textual structure implying that this colonial knowledge stemmed from the Muslim merchants trading in these Blacks. In any case, he obviously found the passionate family connectedness of these Jewish women an informative counterpoint to the cold and bestial disconnectedness of the Blacks with their own children. Given the exemplary function of these Jewish women for the author, there is no reason that he would have failed to cite them had he learned of the curse from them. The explanation for Sandys's interest in the curse, though not necessarily for his source for it, lies elsewhere. By the time his narrative appeared, in 1615, he held shares in both the Virginia Company under its third charter (1611) and the Bermudas Company (though the importation of Black slaves to North American colonial settlements began only in 1619).⁸⁸ Finally, perhaps it would not be amiss to imagine that he had heard of the curse of Cham while growing up as the son of Edwin Sandys, the bishop of Worcester and later archbishop of York.⁸⁹

Obviously, Jewish authorities can be found as explicitly mentioned sources all over Christian biblical exegesis and theological discourse at sites having nothing to do with slavery. It is doubtful that this topic could have generated some inhibiting factors to this pattern of citation. Indeed, Christian citation of Jews comprises a fascinating trope of veneration and denigration. While some sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Christian Hebraists, Catholic and Protestant, adulated Jewish biblical interpretation, opposition to its dangers proliferated. In the battle that marked the conversation between Christian and Jewish interpretation of their shared sacred scriptures, the texts about Ham constitute an intriguing silence. Gilbert Genebrard served as professor of Hebrew at the College of France. He cited the writings of Rabbi Levi on Genesis 9.

The English Matthew Poole (1624–1679) cited the tradition of the Hebrews as a source for the idea that Canaan saw his father's nakedness, whereas Cham related it to his brothers.⁹⁰ Indeed, the most explicit invocation of Jewish sources relating to Cham came rather late in this seventeenth-century history. It does not need to be conjured up out of imaginary ghetto encounters, as the clergyman Allier attempted in order to explain Jean-Louis Hanneman's derivation of the curse on Cham. In a 1667 work, the Swiss Hebraist Johann Heinrich Heidegger (1638–1698) quoted several Jewish sources at length. Heidegger cited R. Efra'im Shlomo b. Aharon of Lenczyca's (d. 1619) famous commentary, *Kli Yakar*, as a source for the idea that Cham acquired his libidinous behavior from the animals while on the ark. Heidegger then quoted verbatim the tale from *Midrash Tanhuma* detailing the bodily deformations to alight on Cham as a result of his perverse crimes, although Heidegger presented these deformations as part of a novel understanding of how Noah knew who had committed the misdeed against him.⁹¹

Heidegger aside, the early modern iterations of the curse of Ham constitute a case of anonymous quotation of older Jewish sources, although it cannot be determined whether the Christian authors knew these sources directly and chose to cite them indirectly or simply only knew them through prior Christian authorities. Genebrard invoked no specific Jewish references, but obviously as a Hebraist had such sources at his disposal and cited them elsewhere for pertinent themes. George Best, like others, asserted that the loathsome Blacks descended through Chus, a notion deriving possibly from Rashi.⁹² The notion, repeated by early modern Christian authors besides Best, that the Blackness of Ethiopians serves as a public rebuke for their progenitor's crime probably came, whether they knew it or not, from R. David Kimhi, a favorite of Christian Hebraists. Anonymous quotation carries many meanings and the nature of the tactic makes it impossible to adequately identify motivation. Anonymous quotation can soften criticism of a source, especially a respected one. It can mark deference to a still-living authority, as well as worry that a still-living authority carried less weight than an ancient one. It is possible that in the case of the curse of Ham, the authors cited earlier Christian precedents because these would be seen as bolstering their case, but such reasoning appears tenuous, to say the least, when these same authors readily cite Jewish sources at many other textual sites. Finally, contra Ivan Hannaford, the influence of Jewish interpretation, especially kabbalah, cannot be overplayed. Many Christian Hebraists with a fine command of Hebrew and Aramaic, such as Genebrard, Sebastian Münster, or Guillaume Postel, did not cite the curse of Ham, although they would have been in a better position to know about such material than other authors.⁹³ Other Christian Hebraists who obviously knew of the material regarding Ham openly rejected it.⁹⁴

As in Jewish discourse, the Christian texts mentioning a curse of Ham are strikingly few (as far as is known), considering the number of writers then working. Many cited the Hamitic genealogy to explain the historical origin of Blacks, but without ever drawing on it again, much less in connection with human Blackness or the enslavement of Blacks.⁹⁵ One wonders how implicit a curse might have been for readers of even the mere name of Ham; it is possible, that is, that there was something overdetermined about the mere recitation of these biblical and classical figures, but it is difficult to accurately measure this. Thus, when the English poet Elizabeth Cary, in a 1613 poem, had a character tell women, "Chams servile curse to all your sex was given/Because in Paradise you did offend," nothing necessitates that she had Black Africans in mind. Given the contextual importance of Blackness and Whiteness in Cary's poem, such an identification makes sense, but never was it brought up directly.⁹⁶ Many writers evoked the Hamitic genealogy only as a general theory as to slavery's origin, and by no means the only opinion.⁹⁷ Many of the authors, even those active in colonizing adventures (and holding mightily low opinions of Blacks), in fact dismissed or refuted the notion of any curse.⁹⁸ Miguel Cabello de Balboa wrote, circa 1586 from Quito, that the various Black Ethiopian nations descended from Cham's son Chus, but hinted that any attribution of their Blackness to this descent is not to be believed.⁹⁹ Gregorio Garcia presented (ca. 1607) as a response to the notion that the debased and degenerate American Indians came from the ancient Phoenician sailors of Cartagena the opinion that many African peoples descending from Cam are esteemed and comprise "peoples of valor."¹⁰⁰ Walter Raleigh's 1652 world history deemed the attempts to bring the biblical genealogies into the present as "ridiculous fables."¹⁰¹ Cotton Mather as well, writing around 1706, dismissed the notion of a curse on Ham and appeared unconvinced that Blacks even descended from Ham.¹⁰² John Locke opined that "no amount of research would reveal the lines of descent of Noah and of Shem."¹⁰³ Dutch authors as well showed minimal interest in the curse of Ham as explanation for the Blackness of sub-Saharan Africans or their servitude, preferring other arguments.¹⁰⁴ Furthermore, the curse itself generated much vacillation and uncertainty, showing once again that this discourse was hardly linear and inevitable. The work of Peter Heyleyn shows an opposite trajectory. The 1621 first edition of his *Microcosmus* ignored the curse, the 1627 edition called it a "foolish tale," while his 1666 *Cosmographiae* partially endorsed it: "[P]ossibly enough the Curse of God on *Cham* and on his posterity (though for some cause unknown to us) hath an influence" on the origin of Black skin.¹⁰⁵ If the Jewish origin of the ideas of a curse bothered any of these authors, they certainly had every opportunity to denounce it. Rather, the "Jewish" source of the curse on Ham remains an invention of twentieth-century Christian polemicists.

Clearly, the idea of a curse on Ham comprised but one strand of the many-faceted attempts to understand the nature and culture of these exotic peoples. Advances in geographical and biological knowledge brought forward scientifically modified versions of classical theories, or entirely new ones, which influenced the attractiveness or poverty of the biblical and theological evidence. Many authors preferred classical histories of Ethiopian origins, rather than their biblical counterparts. As the equatorial zones of the Americas and eastern Asia and their inhabitants became better known to Europeans, the different physiognomies of the various natives made the climatological explanation for the Black skin of Africans less convincing.¹⁰⁶ The increasing use made of Black labor by European elites heightened the appeal of a Hamitic curse's entrenchment of Black servility.

REINVENTING PERPETUAL SLAVERY

David Brion Davis and other scholars argued that the curse of Ham played little role before the "height" of "modern" slavery in the nineteenth century. In their view, the enslavement of Africans needed no justification other than that they were pagans, as was true for the inhabitants of the Canary Islands and the American territories enslaved by the Spanish settlers.¹⁰⁷ Paganism often determined the difference between receiving human consideration or not. The repetition of epithets for Blacks in sixteenth- and early-seventeenth-century English discourse produces a list too long to provide; in William Cunningham (1559) it was "black, Savage, Monstrous, & rude," and in Hakluyt (1589) it was "wilde and idle," "savage," and "barbarous."¹⁰⁸ These clusters perfectly parallel Portuguese depictions from the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries: Duarte Pacheco Pereira (writing in 1505/6) characterized various African peoples as "evil," "savage," and "idolatrous."¹⁰⁹ Official chronicler of Spain Hernando del Pulgar described Mina as a land of "savage people, black men, who were naked and lived in huts."¹¹⁰ In the 1460s, Portuguese custom provided that the master of a baptized Black "may not sell him or part with him unless he gives him to a friend. But as long as he is not baptised his master can sell him at any price."¹¹¹ Planters on seventeenth-century Barbados held that the paganism of Africans made it proper for them to be held in bondage.¹¹² Indeed, the English Court of Common Pleas ruled in 1693 that Blacks "could be held as property because they were heathens [*sic*]," a ruling that was sustained by later courts.¹¹³

Jewish statements about the perpetual servitude of Blacks found application, though infrequently, during the period under discussion. Yet as far as I can see, the curse of Ham remained unaffiliated with any actual instances of enslavement in the Jewish sphere. For instance, the blessings to be said on purchasing a slave

make no mention of a curse:

When a Jew purchases a slave he needs to make a blessing over this and the one blessing [i.e., the master] says: "Have mercy and remember, master of this slave, to rejoice in his deeds and to enslave him and his children after him as it says: 'you may keep them as a possession for your children after you, for them to inherit as property for all time [Lev. 25:46].'] Blessed are You, who is good and who does good."¹¹⁴

This 1687 book of daily blessings from Amsterdam provided the same wording offered by medieval tradition.¹¹⁵ The two verses prior to the proof text from Leviticus, which were not quoted, identified those whom this perpetual slavery targets: "from the nations round about you . . . you may acquire male and female slaves. You may also buy them from among the children of aliens resident among you, or from their families that are among you, whom they begot in your land." Though not generically "myth" in the original, the quotation from Leviticus here functioned as myth, working, as myths often do, "in close conjunction with rituals, complementing and elaborating or reshaping their forms, sometimes incorporating fragments of myths as in-texts, transformed and inserted into particular moments of the narrative [of the ritual] itself."¹¹⁶ This myth fragment reminded those present that God promised and regulated (promises and regulates) the possession of (certain kinds of) slaves. This biblical text did not specify Canaanites. That these passages referred to the time when the Israelites were living in the land of Israel suggests that it had in mind the various neighboring peoples, which would or would not include Canaanites, depending on how one interprets the biblical commands vis-à-vis destroying the "seven nations" and their historical enactment.¹¹⁷ If one held that the biblical text comprised a unified work by a single divine author, as was believed by most everyone until the seventeenth century, the "nations round about you" and resident aliens of Leviticus 25:43-46 would appear to stand synonymous with the Canaanites cursed with perpetual servitude in the ninth chapter of Genesis. But the blessing assumes that the biblical text left the set open-ended, allowing the possibility that any "neighboring" people and children of neighbors could be enslaved, although the biblical text could and was easily read by some early modern rabbis as sanctioning such enslavement only during ancient autochthonic Jewish sovereignty. No curse on Kena'an or on Ham is cited. Once one has expanded the set of permitted slaves, however, the slippage between the implied paganism and moral primitivity of the peoples specified in the biblical texts and the cultural status of whatever new peoples were included found its rationalization in assuming the latter's similarly uncivilized condition.

The myth fragment, a verse from Leviticus, and the whole blessing were spoken aloud by the master, a speech-act turning a free human being into a

slave. The slave's presence might not even have been a requirement for the ritual. If delivered in Hebrew, the newly acquired slave who was present presumably would have been excluded from understanding, made into an incomprehending audience of the performance. Here the myth fragment/blessing justified the rite of coming into possession of an enslaved human being, an act which easily might have given rise to considerations of morality and justice. In the face of "moments of risk where change is acknowledged," the text/ritual comes "to police the anomalies created by . . . changes of status, clarifying ambiguities and clearly marking and legitimating transitions."¹¹⁸ This same function was doubled if the blessing/myth fragment was delivered in, for instance, Spanish in the presence of a slave who understood some or much of the language and thus became an (unaddressed) object of the force of the ritual/myth.

Let us compare this bit of applied discourse to others from a Christian Iberian provenance. Here the notion that Blacks were captives of a war justified by their being infidel pagans and thus enemies of the faith constituted more than abstract theorizing. Since language to this effect was absolutely typical of documents pertaining to slaves in Spain, one example, a case adjudicated by local officials in sixteenth-century Valencia, will suffice to show how the "just war" theory functioned as the speech-act sealing decisions rendering someone a slave:

Francisco Girón Castellblach de Rebolledo wants to sell a woman slave, who says that she was already drafted [i.e., kidnapped for enslavement] in Alicante [south of the port of Valencia, near the Mediterranean coast], but cannot demonstrate this, for which it was ordered that she be drafted again. In the confessions which are taken from the slave woman, she says she is called Paula, is not a Christian and proceeds from Borno, in the forest of Guinea, where she was known by the name of Aixa. The *Bayle* considers her as a captive of a good war, saying: "That which of Aixa. The *Bayle* considers her as a captive of a good war, saying: "That which the most magnificent . . . said, in view of the said confessions . . . since the said slave woman is of the nation/birth of infidels and enemies of the Holy Catholic Faith and of the King, by which he/it [the King? the law?] assigned that one [i.e., her] as a slave of good war."¹¹⁹

As with the previous Jewish blessing, the complexities of this text could fruitfully accept extensive analysis.¹²⁰ For now, one might suffice to note the different languages in the passage (re)produced by the unknown scribe – the "high" Latin and Latinate of the official responding to the simple straightforward Castilian of the slave (speaking through an interpreter?) – as reflecting and creating the power differential by means of which the woman slave Paula/Aixa can be kept as such. That "official" Latin resided in these sentences bespeaks the place of Church policy in everyday sixteenth-century Valencia, regarding at least one face of its local application. The vocabulary of the scribe itself instantiated this policy: The slave was "drafted," as if for military service, as if in a (just) war, not

kidnapped or forcibly enslaved in the streets (had she run away?); she could not "demonstrate" that her enslavement is unjust, that is, produce documentation recognizable and acceptable to the bureaucracy empowered with her life. The cause of her slavery is clearly indicated as her being a pagan and (therefore?) an enemy of Christianity.

Another text indicates that while great similarities obtained between Jewish and Christian ritual speech-acts of enslavement, differences existed in the context in which they were performed. Around 1694, the slave trappers operating out of Luanda, Angola, came together to compose a document. In it they described their slaves as "brutes without intelligent understanding . . . almost, if one may say so, irrational beings." These terms cannot be distinguished from some of the expressions of medieval or early modern Jewish discourse of Kushite inferiority. The context, however, reveals far more. What is the nature of the document containing this description? It constituted a petition from the signatories to the colonial authorities, in which they justified their business in trapping Blacks and exporting them as slaves against complaints that they were harassing the local African chiefs allied with the Portuguese Crown.¹²¹

These bits of applied discourse from the Iberian colonial orbit confirm that the day-to-day justification and administration of Black enslavement found little use for the curse of Cham. Not a single invocation of a curse on Cham in a governmental or judicial document from the colonies across the Atlantic has come to my attention. That Jewish discourse at this period also did not produce analogous applications cannot be attributed to any innate "Jewish" moral qualities. Rather, the absence derived from the similar mythical/legal basis of slavery's permissibility in the paganism of the enslaved.

Yet the curse of Ham had already been put to use as more than a vague mythico-theological pronouncement in several pivotal fifteenth-century moments in the unfolding of Iberian trade in Blacks and thereafter with some frequency. In the next three centuries, many textual authorities cited it as a possible or even definitive cause of the servitude or Blackness of Black people. I previously cited its appearance in requests to the pope to authorize the Portuguese trade in Blacks in the fifteenth century. In addition, writers from the medieval period onward spoke about belief in a curse on Ham as though it were a widespread phenomenon.¹²² Although it was just one of a handful of working explanations for human Blackness or Black servitude, the increasing popularity of Noah's curse served a specific purpose in justifying the increasingly Black slavery on which several Catholic and Protestant societies were coming to depend.¹²³

Many of the Iberian citations to a curse of Cham appear in works that were authorized in one form or another by the colonizing authorities, usually in Europe. The passing citation by Palacios Rubios of the curse of Cam/Canaan

came in a work commissioned by the Spanish king Ferdinand the Catholic.¹²⁴ López de Gómara served as chaplain to Hernán Cortés. Official sponsorship predetermined findings that would vindicate, by multiple justifications, monarchic policies. Silvio Zavala explicated the inescapable logic of domination found in the variety of justifications offered by such authors for the servitude of pagan Africans: "[A]gainst the infidel who resists, war and legal slavery are applied; against the obedient [pagan, who does not resist and admits Christian preachers] natural servitude based on ineptitude or barbarism can be wielded."¹²⁵

One can learn more from a thorough survey of the appearances of Ham's curse. Before the eighteenth century, as far as the evidence indicates, it was invoked with extreme and surprising rarity by two groups: travelers to sub-Saharan Africa and colonial plantation owners. Of the former, the curse appealed most to Englishmen with experience in Africa, although only a few of the many English travelers from before 1700 actually brought it up (George Best, George Sandys, Richard Jobson, Thomas Herbert). Although many of the Spanish or Portuguese authors who mentioned the curse lived in the colonies (Juan de Torquemada, Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão, Buenaventura de Salinas y Córdova, Alonso de Sandoval, Antonio Rodríguez de León Pinelo, and Jorge Benci), few were planters. Brandão was a wealthy planter in Bahia, León Pinelo a wealthy magistrate in Lima. Many of the others would have considered themselves strongly ameliorationist. George Sandys constitutes a possible English example, though he still lived in England at the time he cites the curse. His colonial aspirations may well have existed then, however. In 1619 he sought the governorship of Bermuda, and in 1621 he was named treasurer of the Virginia Company, sailing that same year to Jamestown.¹²⁶ The Reverend Thomas Cooper dedicated his 1615 tract, *The Blessing of Japheth, proving the Gathering of the Gentiles*, to, among others, "the worthie Commissioners, for the plantations in Ireland and Virginia." Within, Cooper adduced the crime of Cham, for which God retaliated, decreeing "this cursed race of Cham scattered towards the South, in Affrica," while Shem "shall be Lord over his cursed brother, and his posteritie."¹²⁷ Those who cited a curse on Ham, then, were mostly theologians and lawyers in Europe trying to answer policy needs and philosophical questions about the justification of the enslavement of Africans and the source of their skin color. In short, the curse of Ham posed little interest to those managing Blacks on a face-to-face, day-to-day level. It appealed more to those conceptualizing and planning colonial efforts, those engaged wittingly or not in working out a general ideology of European superiority.

The desire to ground the explanation for Black (or Indian) slavery or human Blackness obviously was very strong. Many of the citations to previous authorities simply do not bear out. The creole Jesuit Buenaventura de Salinas y

Córdoba and León Pinelo both cited Geronimo Osorio (1508–1580) as a source for the origin of all Indians in Cam, but I was unable to find any such mention in the chapter of his work that they referenced.¹²⁸ Salinas y Córdoba adduced Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas as a source for the origin of the skin color of the natives of Hispaniola (Cuba), but Herrera y Tordesillas only discussed a native of Hispaniola who quoted the story of Noah and the flood, rebuking the persecuting Spaniards by showing that they came from one of Noah's sons while the Indians came from another.¹²⁹ Salinas y Córdoba reported this, incorrectly, as evidence that the Indians knew not only that they descended from Cam, the cursed son of Noah, but that for this reason they were born "bestial, of diverse colors, and went naked."¹³⁰ Solórzano and León Pinelo made reference to the work of Gregorio Lopez Madera, whose text also turns out not to state what they claimed.¹³¹ Antonio Possevino cited Genebrard repeatedly for his alleged assertions about the descendants of Chus cursed in both servitude and Blackness, though nowhere did Genebrard discuss the curse of Cham in terms of Blackness.¹³² Possevino referred to "Hebrew tradition" for the notion that Ham was born, as were his brothers, of a White father, but that "Chus – or at least his descendants – was of a dark color as a manifest proof of his father's crime." But Noah's Whiteness is not something that appeared in midrash; Possevino's interpretation might have been a creative inference from such comments as those of Rashi (to B.T. Sanhedrin 108b), which introduced the idea that Ham's punishment consisted of his engendering Kush and his darkened progeny, strongly implying that Noah had been a different, lighter color. The distance from this vague medieval implication to the firm, positive early modern assertion of Whiteness reveals the changed ideological import borne by the curse. Finally, one Dominican priest, brought before the Inquisition in Lima in 1575, asserted that Blacks were justifiably enslaved as a divine punishment for the sins of their fathers, "and that as a sign of this God gave them that color [black]." As a proof text, he adduced not the Curse of Ham but the blessing of the patriarch Jacob to his son Asher, though he actually meant the blessing of Yissachar (Gen. 49:14–15), which connected the tribe with the servile Canaanites by describing its eponymous progenitor as "a strong ass," that is, a beast of burden. This exegesis the priest learned, so he said, from an angel who spoke through the mouth of one of the priest's colleagues.¹³³

In addition, several of the authors reported or concocted prophecies circulating among the indigenous populations that "proved" their justified conquest by the Europeans. João de Lucena (1550–1600), cited by several later Iberian authors, adduced a cross erected in India by an ancient apostle, which predicted that when the sea rose to its feet, a conquering white people would arrive.¹³⁴ Richard Jobson, sent to West Africa by the English Guinea Company in the early 1620s to explore commercial possibilities, announced that among the natives

"a prophecy remains, that they shall be subdued, and remain subject to a white people: and what know we, but that determinate time of God is at hand, and that it shall be His Almighty's pleasure, to make our nation his instrument."¹³⁵ The French priest Jean-Baptiste Labat, who visited both the West Coast of Africa and the Caribbean, affirmed that Blacks maintained awareness of their descent from Cham.¹³⁶ Perhaps most nakedly, Torquemada produced, along with his reliance on Can's accursedness, a propagandistic glowing report of the good treatment awaiting Black slaves in the Spanish colonies, supposedly penned by one Black slave in Mexico to a Black slave friend on the island of Hispaniola: "Friend . . . this is a good land for slaves, here a Black has good food, here a Black has a slave, who serves the Black[;] have your master sell you, so that you may come to this Land, for it is the best in the World for Blacks." If the Blacks face difficulties, "they stay at the house with their Masters, who treat them as if they were Children, and hence dress them and feed them . . . and many times the Masters marry them to their female slaves."¹³⁷ These transparently wishful projections and misreadings of earlier texts reveal a growing need to ground European domination on a firm ideological shore.

Finally, following the pressures exerted by genre, the difference between the citations by Jewish authors and those by Catholics and Protestants comes across quite clearly. Jewish authors, whether Sephardic or Ashkenazic, cited it exclusively en passant, in the context of explicating certain passages of Genesis 9 or 10. Not once did the idea of a curse of Ham arise in a text by a Jewish author independent of the exegesis of these biblical sources. (Which is not to say that the resulting topical exegesis is any less negative.) Jewish authors from this period did not raise a curse on Ham in connection with any specific political, colonial, or economic agenda. On the other hand, Catholic and Protestant authors adduced a curse on Cham for the most part *not* in the course of biblical exegesis,¹³⁸ but rather overwhelmingly in works of ethnography, geography, or travel reportage. Continental authors from places other than Spain or Portugal or England tended to evoke it in more general historical works, while the works stemming from Iberian and English authors pertained more directly to national colonial endeavors. In other generic fields, the notion of a curse clearly offered little advantage. Bernardo José Aldrete (1565–1645), canon of the Church of Córdoba, wrote an entire work, published in 1614, on the linguistic relations of the peoples of Spain, Africa, and Arabia without mentioning a curse of Cham or the term "negro." Although it culminated in chapters on the vices of the African peoples and on their descent from emigrants from Arabia, the animus of Aldrete's tome remained the accursed Muslims.¹³⁹ A curse on Ham was raised mostly as an argument in Christian European authors' arsenal of historical, philosophical, and traditional proofs for explaining two contemporary quandaries: 1) the moral quandary of justifying the enslavement of Blacks (or

Indians, which I have not treated here), and 2) the philosophic or scientific quandary of the origin of Black skin. Jewish authors raised a curse on Ham out of a need to solve textual problems. Catholic and Protestant authors raised it due to the increasing reality of Black slaves in the European orbit.

Unlike the iterations of the curse of Ham in Catholic and Protestant discourse, then, the curse of Ham appeared in Jewish discourse almost exclusively in indirect and distant linkage with the contemporary enslavement or Blackness of Blacks. The division of the three continents to Noah's three sons – with Africa going to Ham – in the 1697 *Meditaciones* of the Amsterdam Sephardi Moseh de Ishac Dias accompanied the text's dedicatory epistle to the Jewish school of Jodensavanne, Surinam, run by Samuel Nassy.¹⁴⁰ Dias must have been aware of this colonial community's dependence on slave labor. Yet Dias made no mention of any curse on Ham. Exceptions, statements with direct reference to the issue of enslavement, appeared extremely rarely. One is the statement of R. Yehudah Löw of Prague implying that maidservants who are "daughters of Ham" are not "kosher," which makes little sense except as an interdiction on or specific denigration of maidservants of a certain background.¹⁴¹ The questions surrounding Löw's statements are many. Whatever slaves existed in sixteenth-century Prague probably came from southern Muslim lands, but who exactly Löw intended here cannot be said with certainty. Perhaps he was merely positing the slaves he imagined as peopling the world of the rabbinic authors of *Ethics of the Fathers*. Löw's intense antislave and anti-Hamitic discourse evoked an innate condition that would seem to hearken to the biblical or rabbinic curse on Ham, despite its overt absence. Only one author, Yitshak Abravanel, associated the Blackness and/or enslavement of Blacks in a strong fashion with their religious depravity. Some Jewish authors in this period obviously continued to find a curse on Ham useful as a universal metaphysical conceptual framework. But if Christian authors borrowed the curse of Ham from Jewish discourse, it was taken from earlier strata rather than contemporary Jewish usages, which wielded it as a barely living concern with little evident connection to current institutional slavery.

It is probable, then, that the curse of Ham gained in popularity during the "long" seventeenth century because of the two related causes already discussed: first, the need to justify the recent "invention" of perpetual slavery for Blacks; additionally, it usefully explained the difference, increasingly seen to be essential, between Blacks and Whites. The idea, suggested by Winthrop D. Jordan and David Brion Davis, that Christian discourse used the curse of Ham to explain slavery while Jewish discourse saw in it an explanation of Blackness is too neat and can only be sustained, if at all, for the medieval period.¹⁴² Many of the citations by Jewish authorities of Ham's (and his descendants') Blackness, even when not explicitly doubled with servitude, appear contiguous

to the assertion of such servitude. Fifteenth- through seventeenth-century Portuguese and Spanish citations of the curse of Ham invoked it both to explain Black servitude and why Blacks have the skin color they do.¹⁴³ Geronimo Osorio was cited by later Iberian authors for having stated that both the Eastern and Western Indians descended from Cam and that this explained their dark skin color. Torquemada raised it in connection with servitude in general and the color of Indians and Blacks. The author of the Portuguese "Explanation of Why Blacks Are Black" spoke mostly of Blackness, not servitude.¹⁴⁴ Seventeenth-century Dutch authors, on the other hand, raised the curse only in regards to slavery and not once in connection with Black skin, a notion they dismissed.

Justifying the slave trade became increasingly necessary just at this period when the traffic in slaves from Africa expanded exponentially. It was in the 1570s that Brazil's sugar industry began achieving international status, requiring the importation of more and more Africans.¹⁴⁵ By the end of the sixteenth century, the indigenous populations of the Spanish colonies had all but disappeared as a labor source, forcing the burgeoning silver mines and administrative centers of Peru and New Spain to import greater numbers of Africans. Hence, the significance of the Viceroyalty of Peru's producing a number of citations to a curse on Cham in the early to mid-seventeenth century. By this time English, Dutch, and French merchants and merchant companies had elbowed their way into the slave trade as well. According to David Eltis, while between 1500 and 1580 some 74,000 Africans were forcibly boarded on boats for transshipment to the Americas, between 1580 and 1640 some 714,000 Africans found themselves in the same dire circumstance, a nearly tenfold increase.¹⁴⁶

What the curse of Ham mostly came to explain, when applied to Blacks from the sixteenth century and after, is the *perpetuity* of their servitude,¹⁴⁷ on the one hand, and the origin of their physiognomy, on the other. Linkage between servitude and heredity obviously appeared before the early modern period: according to law on the level of the individual and sometimes according to myth on the level of the ethnic collective.¹⁴⁸ The biblical text made this unfortunate reading perfectly sensible; Noah's curse came to enforce such a distinction. None of the major justifications for enslaving sub-Saharan Africans and Amerindians – their paganism, theories of just war – necessitated their perpetual servitude. Only the bull of Pope Nicolas V, *Romanus Pontifex* (1454), stipulated outright that "Saracens and Pagans" could, under the banner of Christianity, be attacked, expelled from their lands, and subjugated in *perpetual* servitude. Yet not all rulers or thinkers followed the letter of this bull.¹⁴⁹ Indeed, the evidence shows that early on in each colonial power's expansion, Blacks were often manumitted and, more importantly, the *possibility* of individual liberation from servitude was not made unattainable.¹⁵⁰

But it was just at this historical juncture in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the northern European powers and their colonies were working out the economic system that depended on unfree labor. The Iberian powers, competing against increasing northern competition, found it necessary to import more and more Africans to replace the dying Amerindians, whose enslavement was banned in Spanish territories by the 1540s, while hardening prejudices against Blacks into a system of "racial" hierarchy known as the *sistema de castas*. Following the Iberian model of colonization, the English, Dutch, and French acted similarly. Hence, the increasing emphasis on perpetual servitude. Describing Barbados in 1655, Henry Whistler noted that among its inhabitants are "miserable Negers borne to perpetuall slavery thay and thayer seed."¹⁵¹ Writing two years later, Richard Ligon described the social stratification of the same island, where he had operated a plantation, highlighting in his very first sentence about Blacks that "slaves and their posterity [were] subject to their Masters for ever."¹⁵² This perpetual servitude now moved from being mere social custom to being inscribed in law. A committee of the English Council of Foreign Plantations in the late 1650s reported that of the various classes of servants, "Blacks are brought by . . . Trade . . . and are . . . per[pet]uall servants," while Whites, including Gypsies and criminals, served only for a determinate number of years.¹⁵³ Concepts such as a curse on Blacks were seen to be useful in reinforcing or supplanting the thinly stretched and increasingly criticized notions of "just war" as valid in the case of Africans. It is not clear in any case to what degree the Protestant English shared the theory of "just war" so relied upon by Iberian Catholics and bolstered by papal approval.¹⁵⁴

The second main object of Noah's curse on Ham comprised the physiognomy of Blacks, increasingly seen as reflecting a different kind of human being. In light of the growing necessity for Black labor in the colonies, discourse coming out of the metropole defined away the juridical humanity of Black people. In 1672, the charter granted to the English Royal Africa Company charged it with the importing of "any redwood, elephants' teeth, negros, slaves, hides, wax, guinea grains or other commodities." Two years later a Royal Proclamation grouped Black servants under "Goods or Merchandise."¹⁵⁵

The crystallization of a notion of Blackness that transcended the different African nations or peoples developed around the mid-seventeenth century.¹⁵⁶ Admittedly, the naming of African ethnic groups itself never transcended a certain fuzziness.¹⁵⁷ Bureaucratic discourse in Spanish and Portuguese territories had long used a terminology built on skin color. No doubt one motivation for such descriptions lay in the need for physical identification of persons.¹⁵⁸ This administrative function yielded quickly to more pregnant motivations, given the strong feelings surrounding questions of blood inheritance and its purity. Already by 1470, an index of acts of the town council of Funchal, Madeira, where

Black slaves made up most of the labor force, used "Black" as an autonomous appellation, removed from any obvious need for physical description: "A black [man] or black [woman] tied . . . at the pillory / E negro ou negra achado de noute asoitoz no Pilour."¹⁵⁹ Over the course of the seventeenth century, a notion of Blackness as an intrinsic phenomenon was worked out under two related influences: 1) medical science, increasingly interested in understanding biological reproduction;¹⁶⁰ and 2) the increasingly evident shortcomings and dangers of climatological schema in the face of the new intercontinental mobility of Europeans, Africans, Americans, and so on.¹⁶¹ The French missionary abroad, Labat, represented the school of skeptics when he argued that if climate caused the Blackness of Blacks then

all the people who would live with them or at least their children who were born there would get the same color; and equally as a result the Negroes who were transported to the countries furthest away from the sun, more temperate or colder, should change color. But no such thing occurs, the experience of several centuries shows that.¹⁶²

Observation of external physical conditions on the level of the individual, on the one hand, and preservation of metaphysical differences between human "kinds," on the other, generated similar results. The Jesuit Alonso de Sandoval, writing in 1627 while missionizing to slaves around Cartagena de las Indias, considered the Blackness of certain Africans an "intrinsic quality."¹⁶³ William Petty, in an essay of 1676/7, wrote that "the Europeans do not only differ from the aforementioned Africans in Collour . . . but also . . . in Naturall Manners, & in the internall Qualities of their Minds."¹⁶⁴ Within a decade, in 1684, the French thinker François Bernier had divided up the world's population into four different "species," based on varying external physical characteristics, especially skin color.¹⁶⁵ John Locke posited Whiteness as an absolute quality, equivalent to the notion of "man."¹⁶⁶ The English physician John Atkins was persuaded that "the black and white Race have, *ab origine*, sprung from different-coloured first parents."¹⁶⁷ By the end of the seventeenth century, then, "black" was serving as a noun in many European languages, denoting a kind of human being, not a shade of skin pigmentation.¹⁶⁸ The new theories, based on developments in the medical sciences and in social transformation, preferred an explanation that lay in the seed, blood, or "temperament" and that distinguished, both physically and metaphysically at the same time, between kinds of people. As Europeans increasingly moved about the globe to new lands and climes, these biological distinctions assuaged fears that in so doing, they would "be burned as black as a cole, as the Indians or Black Moores."¹⁶⁹ The curse of Ham helped build the refutation of ancient and medieval climatic theory in the interests of European overseas expansion.¹⁷⁰ Here, the curse's usefulness in minimizing the possibility

of acquired Blackness took on an importance after the sixteenth century perhaps greater than that of creating a permanent slave class, hence the curse's prevalence among the engineers of colonialism rather than among the empires' foremen.

EVALUATING JEWISH DISCOURSE REGARDING BLACKS

Between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, Jewish discourse about Blacks stood comparable in many ways with discourse from Catholic and Protestant territories. Both the dominant Christian and Muslim discourses about Blacks manifest a polyphony, if not cacophony, of attitudes. So too in Jewish discourse. Given the sheer volume of Muslim and Christian discourse, anti-Black sentiments occupy a marginal place. So, too, in Jewish discourse. In all three religious domains, the attitude comes across on the whole as dismissive of the equality of Blacks with people who come from the kinds of cultures that create great religions. These authors proffered views of the primitivity and moral, intellectual, and cultural inferiority, even monstrosity, of sub-Saharan Africans. Like its non-Jewish parallels, Jewish discourse also on rare occasion saw Blacks as equally human, as circumstantially subjugated.¹⁷¹

The diachronic heterogeneity of discourse must be acknowledged. A given discourse at any one time contains utterances from many temporal strata simultaneously. This was certainly true for the utterances within Jewish discourse relating to Blacks. The aggadic topoi denigrating Ham, the medieval anti-Black expressions of Rashi, and the medieval versions of *Divrei ha-Yamin shel Moshe Rabeinu* existed side by side with more modern statements, nearly without exception uncontested. Seventeenth-century translations of Yehuda ha-Levi's *Kuzari* into Spanish reiterated in the contemporary lingua franca the anti-Black passages originally written in Arabic, without qualification or contestation. The widely popular travel report or fantasy of Eldad ha-Dani (ninth century) continued to be printed throughout this era, making accessible to new generations of Hebrew readers its recitation of the scene in which tall cannibalistic Kushites as black as ravens eat Eldad's plump traveling companion alive.¹⁷²

The materials of my analysis obviously cross scholarly borders between "the Renaissance" and "the Baroque," for instance. One also sees the subtle shifting of discourses over time. Statements regarding Moshe's Kushite wife grew in negativity and fixated increasingly on her Blackness. Jewish descriptions of Blacks reflect to some degree awareness of the latter's contemporary situation and use of the more recent ethnographic vocabulary. Earlier statements in general continued to reflect an astrological or humoral approach, while later notions emerged from biology. Yet the linearity found in this shift is not always so clear. Determinism gave up its geographical base, the restrictive and unnuanced

theory of the world's seven climes, but otherwise remained powerful under the guise of "race." "Repetition with change" might be the best way to describe the phenomenology of this discourse about Blacks.

Another noticeable fact is the far higher number of statements about Ham or Moshe's Kushite wife in early modern Jewish discourse than about Kushites in general. This might reflect the degree to which Jewish thinkers remained steeped in a biblical worldview. More likely, it reflects the continued generic hold of Bible- and midrash-based forms. Jewish statements about Ham remained static and seemingly unconnected to any consideration of actual Blacks. Literary genres, which allow their authors far more unrestrained freedom of discursive movement, did not appear as prominently in Hebrew. Extremely few Jewish writers, among them Avraham Farisol, evinced the high level of detail possible from intimate observation of the kind to be found in explorers' literature, from which Farisol not coincidentally plagiarized. Indeed, no real Jewish parallel to this entire body of travel literature from Christian Europe existed. The general absence of Blacks reflects as well the lesser direct contact that most Jews had with slave trading and the administration and management of slaves in a personal or collective setting. Little in the Jewish literature of this era compares in nastiness with the Neapolitan tales collected by Giambattista Basile (ca. 1575-1632), framed in Arabian Nights fashion by the central plot of a "black, barbarous, hideous, ugly" and unnamed Black slave woman who cruelly cheats a princess out of attaining her beloved.¹⁷³ Jews evidently cared less about issues pertaining to Blacks and perhaps had less cause for generating opinions on the matter.

Jewish comments about Blacks, without exception brief and in passing, tended to focus on their Blackness more than on other features. This might be due to the specificity of the biblical sites that for the most part arouse the comments. Whereas in Christian European discourse comments about Blacks might have grown out of conflicting thought about national goals and procedures, increasing populations of slave and free Blacks, and methods of administration, Jewish utterances about Blacks tended to arise out of more diffuse processes of identity construction. Perhaps, then, the fixation of Jewish authors on Black skin reflects a projection particular to the anxieties Jews might have felt regarding their own ambiguous complexion as often-unwanted outsiders within territories increasingly defining themselves as a single unit, "Europe," and an increasingly White one at that. This marks the subject of the next chapter, in which we will explore the results on Jewish discourse of the sociopolitical configuration of Sephardic Amsterdam, where a contingent of Black slaves existed large enough to give a different shape to Jewish attitudes and behavior, one more akin to the administrative modes of Christian discourse.

Inventing Jewish Whiteness

The Seventeenth-Century Western Sephardic Diaspora, Part I

In this chapter and the next, I explore several aspects of the (self-)fashioning of early modern Jews into Whites in and under European colonialism. The central location is seventeenth-century Amsterdam, although I follow the pertinent flow of people and discourse into and out of this recent haven for (ex-)Conversos and Sephardic Jews. This chapter's first section traces the decline of the circumcision of slaves in the seventeenth century, a decline reflective of an increasing discomfort with the religious absorption of slaves, now mostly Black, on the part of Western Sephardic Jews, themselves uneasy about their own status vis-à-vis Whiteness. These twin discomforts serve as the themes of the next section, which treats Jewish and non-Jewish views of Jewish somatic darkness. The first section of the next chapter covers the communal legislation constructing and reflecting the Jewish response, as it were, while the second segment investigates one specific instantiation of Jewish Whiteness, a result of a late-seventeenth-century visit of some Amsterdam Sephardim to their newly (re)discovered cousins in Cochin, India. First, however, a few words to help set the stage.

The idea of "nation" at the end of the Middle Ages constituted an essentially ethnolinguistic one. As previously mentioned, from the era of contact with sub-Saharan Africans, Europeans appeared familiar with the different nations or "countries" from which they originated.¹ Although no contemporary source delineated the relationship between the categorical level of these nations and the categorical level of "Blacks / *negros*," one sees by the seventeenth century their simultaneous use.² Although knowledge of ethnic particularities in Africa continued in Europe and the Americas among planters, merchants, travelers, missionaries, and politicians, the generic term *negro* or Black and the cluster of concepts around it came to predominate. The importance of the term and concept of Whiteness not surprisingly also rose in this period. The specific usefulness of Whiteness for Jews inhered in the fact that Jews could

include themselves in the dominant culture as Whites in a way they could not as non-Christians. One late-twentieth-century Jew growing up in Mississippi aptly expressed this quandary in his recollections: "I didn't want to be Christian . . . but at the same time . . . I didn't want to be different."³ Whiteness provided entrée into the dominant class to Jews who believed they belonged there by dint of the quality and antiquity of their civilization; such was their hope, in any case.

Throughout this discussion I purposely avoid use of the term "race." Scholarship focused on this term and concept has tended to become distracted by the goal of producing a retrojected linear history. Ivan Hannaford's account constitutes only the most recent example of such an approach.⁴ Scholarship covering this textual or intellectual history has tended to date the "origin" of "racism" to developments in eighteenth-century European thought, while scholarship focused on social history prefers a somewhat earlier unfolding in the European colonies. Hannaford's history of the idea of race in this respect offers little new. According to Hannaford, the "detached and scholarly" European "use of the terms 'race,' 'espèces,' and 'ethnic groups'" begins to increase in the late seventeenth century (François Bernier [1625–1688], Hobbes [1588–1679], and Locke [1632–1704]), but the real implementation of ordering "humankind in terms of anatomy, climate, and pigmentation in a new and more rational science" came with Johann Friedrich Blumenbach (1752–1840) and the late-eighteenth-century (re)invention of the notion of "national character" and physical anthropology.⁵ Margaret T. Hodgen thought that the break with a continuous great chain of being and one indivisible human kind "came in the last quarter of the seventeenth century and the first third of the eighteenth with Sir William Petty's abortive essay entitled *The Cale of Creatures* (1676–77), Sir William Tyson's *Orang-outang, Sive Homo Silvestris; or, The Anatomy of a Pygmie* (1708), and Carl Linnaeus's *System of Nature* (1735)."⁶ Michael Banton found that the word "race" entered English in the sixteenth century, where it at first referred to lineage. But despite the appearance of John Ray (1627–1705), Banton's account of race as classification by type does not really begin until Linnaeus (1707–1778), Kant (1724–1804), and philosophers of their generation.⁷ David Theo Goldberg wrote that "racialized discourse . . . began to be articulated" in the sixteenth century, but began his narrative with Hume (1711–1776), Kant, and Mill (1806–1873).⁸

Historians with a more social bent usually propose a somewhat earlier origin. As I discussed earlier and will treat more extensively in the next chapter, a segregational *sistema de castas* began to be implemented in various Spanish colonies by the mid-seventeenth century and with time solidified in virulence and scope. Social structuration based increasingly solely on skin color spread quickly to the Dutch, English, French, and other colonies. Alden T. Vaughan

saw the concepts of race applied with different meanings and to different groups in the seventeenth century, increasingly in social ways, while "[b]elief in such groupings became more widespread and more invidious as time passed." Misconceptions of race, Vaughan acknowledged, "profoundly shaped early Euro-American relations with Africans (from the outset) and Native Americans (from the seventeenth century onward)."⁹ In Gary Puckrein's view, race became important in Barbados "by the close of the seventeenth century," when Blacks increasingly sought baptism and the Church of England "ruled that conversion did not emancipate slaves," so that "paganism no longer distinguished a slave from a freeman."¹⁰ Peter Fryer likewise located the origin of racism "in the oral tradition in Barbados in the seventeenth-century, [which] crystallized in print in Britain in the eighteenth."¹¹ According to Robin Blackburn, this English "variant of racial slavery," "harsher" than the Iberian form, was "firmly established" already by the 1660s.¹² The Renaissance/Baroque connections between the rise of legal individuality and the legal notion of race buttress a view for an earlier rather than later formation of Euro-colonial racism.¹³

Naturally, the timing of the waxing and waning of anti-Black prejudices varied from one colonial situation to another. Indeed, a comparative look at the development of Black slavery and discourse about Blacks in the Iberian, Dutch, and English colonial empires reveals a nearly identical trajectory of initial acceptance (perhaps ambivalent discursive degradation but lack of social segregation) and subsequent hardening into a "racial" social and discursive structuration.¹⁴ This pattern repeated itself within each empire, within each locale, and by no means appeared in a necessary, linear fashion. Such a framework applies the systadial ("same stage") – rather than synchronic – historical interpretation called for by Sidney W. Mintz.¹⁵ Here again we should note the manner in which the later colonial players learned from their predecessors.

This chapter and the next treat the Jewish "locale" in this intracolonial trajectory. They treat precisely the transition between discursive and social constructions of Blackness and Whiteness. My analysis of the uses of Jewish Whiteness in these chapters does not dramatically challenge the consensual historical schema of "race," though it agrees with nudging it slightly earlier. However, rather than attempt to construct an abstract and totalizing discursive schema of race inductively from a small set of examples, I try to pay attention to specific discriminations in their particular context, social as well as discursive, to see how they are put to use: Who, what is excluded? By whom? How? Why? In this regard, I find attractive R. Douglas Cope's understanding that the seventeenth-century development of the colonial *sistema de castas* marks the gradual imposition of an "elite racial ideology" in the interstices of a system of governance that was "playing off creole against peninsular and . . . striking

compromises between royal authority and colonial claims." The resultant "racial code" relied "heavily on improvisation and patchwork."¹⁶ Not only the code but the definitions behind it were far from stable.¹⁷ Well into the sixteenth century, Portuguese in Brazil often referred to the American natives as *negros* or *negros da terra*.¹⁸ Jews were sometimes seen to be Black. The hammering out of the precise meaning of the term *negro* or Black or *mulatto*, and the system of governing subjects assigned to each category, occurred over the course of two or three centuries – in fact, have never ended. The events covered in this chapter trace, from the perspective of Jewish history, a century or so in the construction of this discourse of governability in the mongrel new world created by colonialism. The events of this chapter occurred in Europe as well, as befits a story for the most part made there, even if it took place mostly elsewhere. In striking ways, residence in Amsterdam created for the Sephardim a social and conceptual constellation similar to that created by White Christians in the overseas European colonies.

THE DWINDLING CIRCUMCISION OF SLAVES IN THE WEST

The desire to convert slaves and servants to Judaism faced a certain amount of suppression from Sephardic lay leaders in the Atlantic world.¹⁹ By the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the circumcision of male slaves and the conversion of all slaves to Judaism seems to have become undesirable and unpracticed in Jewish communities in The Netherlands, England, and their American colonies. Communal practices, including religious ones, experience natural up- and downswings, and circumcision poses no exception. According to Israel Abrahams, "the tendency to enforce [circumcision of slaves] grows with the middle ages," so that "the sixteenth century finds Jews more resolute in this matter than the tenth century found them."²⁰ The decline after the sixteenth century in part stemmed from general political and religious pressures against conversion to Judaism, especially in the English orbit.²¹ It also derived from general trends of Jewish acculturation and falling away from *halakhic* living, especially in the Americas. But, as I will try to show, this transformation also reflected a more intimate nexus with the increasing identity of servitude and Blackness: 1) an increasing propensity to follow low *halakhic* opinion holding that the laws of slavery no longer obtained or to disregard *halakhic* thinking completely when it came to slaves, and 2) the growing use value of "racial" notions in the vocabulary of Jewish leaders and thinkers.

An extended footnote by Cecil Roth will serve as a good beginning point. Discussing the famous and prodigiously illustrated 1723 book by Bernard Picart on the rites and customs of the world's peoples – including the Jews – Roth



FIGURE 3. Bernard Picart, *The Passover of the Portuguese Jews*. Reproduced from Bernard Picart, *Cérémonies et Costumes Religieuses de Tous les Peuples Du Monde* (Amsterdam: J. F. Bernard, 1723).

highlighted the importance of one particular etching depicting the Passover meal of an Amsterdam Sephardic family (Figure 3):

The plates are all, of course, of considerable historic as well as artistic importance, as illustrating most faithfully and vividly Jewish home life in the eighteenth century. Thus in the representation of the Seder, a negro is shown sitting down at table with the family – an obvious indication that the negro slaves of Amsterdam Jews were admitted to the faith. The order of service for the circumcision of slaves is, as a matter of fact, printed in some contemporary prayer books; and there is a certain amount of tumulary evidence pointing in the same direction. Considering the very close intercourse between the communities of Amsterdam and London, it is more than likely that the same practice obtained here as well.²²

Beyond the vagueness of the phrase “admitted to the faith,” Roth’s surmise is both right and wrong. The seventeenth century actually constituted a liminal period during which these practices began to be ignored. It seems that at first,

many of the Black slaves belonging to Jews of Amsterdam indeed underwent the rituals necessary to work in Jewish homes. This can be inferred from the cemetery records treated in Chapter 3 (and mentioned here by Roth) as well as in other sources. For instance, the 1639 *haskamot* (ordinances) of the merged Sephardic congregations stated that “Christian domestic serving girls who carried home kosher meat from the market had to be escorted” by a Jew, yet failed to mention anything about slaves, whom we know existed in the community, even if in small numbers.²³ Probably, this silence was due to the fact that most slaves had (been) converted. But, as I will show, many of the most prominent Western Sephardic communities either banned the circumcision of bought slaves – first in Dutch Brazil (1649) and then in Amsterdam (1650) – or ignored it in practice soon thereafter. In short, the Black servant sitting at this early-eighteenth-century Seder table does not seem “an obvious indication” of anything.

Sitting with his back to the viewer, the servant/slave prepares the vessel used for the ritual washing of the hands. Though not standing, that is, in a position different from the family and one of obvious service, as is often the case in such iconography, this Black servant is still distinguished by posture: He is the only figure whose face is not visible to the viewer, and he engages in an act of service (is he washing his own hands or merely aiding the family in the washing of theirs?). Even the sitting down with the family may tell us more about Dutch practices than Jewish ones, since we know that among the former “[b]oth children and servants usually dined at the same table with their parents and masters.”²⁴ A Sephardic Jew in England who tried, circa 1701, to distance himself from his converted daughter, argued that she had been a servant “and never sat with him at table.”²⁵ Whether this latter case reflected Sephardic or English custom, or that of this particular family, remains unclear. Without wanting to belabor the point, much ambiguity remains about whether this illustration proves that “the negro slaves of Amsterdam Jews were admitted to the faith.”

While some prayer books may have contained the order for the ritual service of circumcising slaves, as Roth notes, many did not. Many of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century books of blessings made no mention of the blessing to be said on purchasing a slave.²⁶ Further, most legal compendia originating in Amsterdam (often written specifically for Conversos returning to Judaism) failed to mention the circumcision of slaves (see later in this section). Additional evidence from Amsterdam, London, and the Dutch and English colonies regarding means of ritual absorption into the Jewish community also fails to indicate the consistent circumcision of male slaves or the proper ritual immersion of either female or male slaves, much less their conversion. I am not arguing that some Jews in these places did not continue to circumcise and/or

immerse their slaves – Chapter 3 showed that a few Black and mulatto slaves had (been) converted in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Amsterdam, and from the language of certain communal ordinances treated in Chapter 8 that some had been circumcised – but that more Jews began not doing so (unlike in eastern Mediterranean regions) and that communal leaders themselves discouraged the conversion of non-White slaves.²⁷ The very instability of the pertinent seventeenth-century discourse and behavior reflects this transformation. If the circumcision of slaves predominated as a halakhic and social norm, why then did it increasingly fail to appear in seventeenth-century halakhic sources from Amsterdam (as well as eighteenth-century sources from there and elsewhere)? Transitional answers were appearing from across the Mediterranean region already in the medieval era.

The minority view from the Talmud and later *poskim* left the window open for the holding of unconverted, uncircumcised pagan slaves.²⁸ Simḥa Asaf stated that R. Mordehai b. Hillel (d. 1310; Ashkenaz) was the rabbi who “renewed” the use of this minority view.²⁹ However, the transition to permission to keep an uncircumcised slave indefinitely was falling into place by the eleventh century. As cited by R. Ya’akov b. Asher (1270?–1340; Spain), R. Yitshak Alfasi (1013–1103; present-day Algeria, Fez) held that a purchased adult slave “does not fall under the laws pertaining to slaves until he converts [circumcises and immerses for the sake of enslavement] on his own will.”³⁰ Rambam, when discussing the necessity of circumcizing a slave, added an unprecedented statement:

And if [the Jew about to purchase the slave] agreed from the start, while the slave was still with his non-Jewish master, not to circumcise him, it is permitted to maintain him uncircumcised. The slave must only take on the seven Noahide commandments and he will be like a resident alien. . . . But we don’t receive resident aliens except in times when the Jubilee year is in effect.³¹

Elsewhere, Rambam wrote that a slave bought from a non-Jew who refused from the outset to be circumcised could be retained in his non-Jewish status without time constraint.³² Rabbi Avraham b. David, known as RABaD (ca. 1125–1198; Posquières), a significant opponent of Rambam on many issues, disputed Rambam’s first formulation that resident aliens were no longer accepted (I cite from a paraphrase):

A Jew may maintain [a slave] who stipulated that he will not circumcise or immerse as long as he wants, in all eras, and the reason is that . . . that which they said, that the concept of resident alien is not operative at this time, was not with the intention of stating that the concept of [receiving] resident aliens is completely inoperative, but rather that it/he [unclear: the concept of the resident alien or the slave under discussion] is not obliged by those laws stated . . . in the *Gemara*.³³

Rabad could not accept that an entire class of converts stood inabsorbable. It must be, he reasoned, that such conversions or movements toward conversion remained licit, only that the various talmudic laws need no longer be followed. He combined some of the just-quoted opinions to construct a situation in which a non-Jewish slave could refuse to be circumcised or immersed, but does take on the Noahide commandments, and can remain in a Jewish household indefinitely. Applied to the laws of slaves, Rabad’s understanding made them akin to the laws of agriculture, which only took effect if one lived in the land of Israel: Jews continued to farm outside of the land of Israel, spatially and temporally; they just did not need to follow the pertinent rabbinic laws. Finally, R. Mordehai b. Hillel held in his commentary to the talmudic tractate *Yevamot* that should the government under which a community of Jews lives not allow the circumcision of slaves, this constituted the equivalent of a slave’s refusal to be circumcised or immersed: “And even though it is not [usually] stipulated at the hour of purchase, if there is simply no circumcising [the slave] because of the government, one does not have a greater stipulation than this, and one is permitted to retain [uncircumcised slaves] forever.”³⁴

From the immensely complex and contradictory tradition that had accumulated down to his time, R. David ibn Zimra, or Radbaz (1479–1573; Egypt), concluded that

there are three kinds of slaves besides a Hebrew slave and they are these: A. One who circumcised and immersed for the sake of enslavement; he is responsible for all the *mitzvot* as is a woman . . . ; Second, one who did not circumcise or immerse but took upon himself the seven *mitzvot* of the sons of Noah, for he is like a resident alien . . . ; C. One who did not circumcise or immerse and worships as an idolator, within the Land of Israel it is forbidden to retain him even one day, but outside of Israel it is permitted to retain him.³⁵

Jews in the diaspora could, then, possess the third kind of slave indefinitely, at least according to the increasingly widened view of this minority opinion. This view, as we will see, came to predominate, despite its never being referred to explicitly in Western communities until the middle of the eighteenth century. The behavior of these communities toward their slaves makes it likely that, at least de facto, they operated according to the view put forth here by Radbaz.

Another transitional answer to the question of the decline in circumcising slaves can be found in the Italian R. Leone da Modena’s *Historia dei riti Ebraici*, first published in 1637 but composed some twenty years earlier. Here, the author explained to his readers only part of the story:

There were in Ancient Times a great many particulars to be observ’d, relating to Slaves which were in the possession of a Jew; whether the Slave, himself were a

Canaanite, as we read *Exod. xxii*. Now-a-days, if they buy any in the *Levant* or *Barbary*, they keep them, make use of them and sell them again, according to the Custom of the Place where they live; and if the Slaves be willing to turn *Jews*, they circumcise them, and bath them, and so set them at Liberty.³⁶

Though no doubt accurately reflecting practice in "western" Europe, Modena's explication also purposefully served an apologetic function. It took the position that slaves were to be assimilated only with their consent in order to counter charges that Jews routinely "judaized" their slaves and servants.³⁷ It also conflated the stages involved in the ritual absorption of slaves, possibly for the same reasons. Circumcision and the first ritual immersion *did not* set slaves free but merely enabled their existence in a Jewish home and their maintenance of certain basic commandments. Only the second ritual immersion, conducted in tandem with their manumission, enabled their existence within the Jewish community by making them full Jews and legitimate marriage partners. Modena obviously presented the most lenient opinion, such as that of Radbaz, that slaves could remain non-Jewish and were only converted if they so chose *after* their liberation. Finally, Modena here made Jewish slaveholding a thing unconnected with "modern," European Jews by limiting its adherence to Jewish communities of the past and the far away.³⁸

An even more distinct transformation in the discourse around circumcision can be read in other texts, nearly all of which derive from Amsterdam, but which reflected the general approach of Western Sephardim to this topic. The starkest such indication of change is the simple and brief 1689 translation of the *Shulkhan Arukh* into Spanish by R. David Pardo. Pardo completely neglected to mention that male slaves were to be circumcised, unlike his source text, whose first edition's section on laws pertaining to slaves opened with the heading "One who takes a slave, to him it is forbidden to maintain [the slave] uncircumcised," although Pardo's translation went to the trouble of repeating the minor point that slaves can perform circumcisions under the close supervision of their owner!³⁹ Ten years earlier, Ishac Cardoso, in a chapter devoted to circumcision, likewise ignored the practice of circumcising slaves while mentioning that a slave (*un siervo*) may perform a circumcision.⁴⁰ Other authors also ignored without explanation the seemingly critical and clear biblical commandment to circumcise male slaves, including many prominent rabbis: a 1683 Hebrew compendium of the commandments by R. Selomoh de Oliveyra (d. 1658); a 1692 digest of the commandments in Spanish; the list of commandments at the back of a 1695 Spanish translation of the Five Books of Moses; a 1713 compendium of the commandments; a similar Hebrew compendium from 1753; a 1763 verse rendition of the commandments according to Rambam; and a 1768 circumcision booklet.⁴¹ Nearly all the authors

of these works lived in Western Europe or in the Dutch or English colonial orbit.⁴²

Again, I am not seeking to prove that the circumcision of slaves disappeared. Menasseh ben Israel's compendium of Jewish laws for Conversos returning to Judaism, from 1647, rather early in the trajectory described in this chapter and the next, includes a chapter on the *halakhot* pertaining to owning slaves, which devotes nearly half of its length to requirements for immersion and circumcision.⁴³ But that so many other rabbis could overlook it indicates that something other than general pressures against *halakha* were operative. After all, these Western Sephardic communities continued to be highly ritually observant in many, many ways throughout the seventeenth century, if not later. These silences cannot all be mere oversights. Only one of these rabbis mentioned, in passing and inferentially, that the laws pertaining to slavery held only until the destruction of the Temple, and this was in the mid-eighteenth century. Not one author referred to the liberalizations of Radbaz or others. It would seem that many leading Sephardic rabbis entered an unpublicized campaign to suppress the practice of circumcising slaves.⁴⁴ These examples, all from the second half of the seventeenth century or later, accompanied changes in the general cultural attitude among Sephardim, as manifested in the Amsterdam Sephardic *mahamad's* 1650 prohibition of the circumcision of Blacks and mulattos. The Amsterdam ban, in turn, may very well have stemmed from the ordinance passed only the previous year by the *mahamad* in Recife, Brazil, declaring that slaves could only be circumcised *after* their liberation. We will return again to the forces motivating this silence on the circumcision of slaves.

SLAVE CONVERSION AND CIRCUMCISION ACCORDING TO CONTEMPORARY LEGAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC RECORDS

Legislation in Western Sephardic communities accompanied the discursive move away from the ritual absorption of slaves. The wariness about accepting converts from among slaves to some degree correlated with pressures against the conversion of Christians to Judaism and with rising "Portuguese" chauvinism. The Amsterdam civic statutes regarding Jews drawn up in 1616 stuck to the bare minimum of medieval legislation concerning Jews, including the usual warning "not to attempt to seduce any Christian person away from our Christian religion or to circumcise one."⁴⁵ In 1627, Amsterdam Sephardic community members were asked not to immerse Blacks or mulattos (or others) without the permission of the *parnasim* (see Chapter 8). With the unification of the three Amsterdam congregations in 1639, various new

ordinances were published forbidding "proselytizing and the circumcision of non-Jews without the community's permission, and then only among those of Sephardic descent."⁴⁶ These regulations sought to avoid endangering the "freedom we enjoy," as the leadership of the Sephardic community put it, and made violation punishable by excommunication.⁴⁷ Finally, in 1650, the parnasim banned outright the circumcision or immersion of Blacks and mulattos who didn't fit a narrow (and halakhically incorrect) definition of a *yelid bayit*, a slave born in the house of the master. It was not until 1750 that a rabbi in Amsterdam – or anywhere in Western Europe or its colonies – stated outright that the Jewish laws pertaining to non-Jewish slaves were no longer valid (see Chapter 9). And to the best of my knowledge, no civic prohibition on the holding of non-Christian slaves and their conversion to Judaism was ever promulgated in The Netherlands, England, or any of their colonies.⁴⁸ Something else caused the shift away from the absorption of slaves into the community.

Let us review the extant legislation from communities under our lens. The 1649 *haskamot* of Recife, Brazil, explicitly addressed the issue of circumcising slaves. No doubt, as in Amsterdam, these *haskamot* proceeded from a specific local cause; Jonathan Israel mentioned, without citing a source, that in early Dutch Brazil "a few of the Jews were mulatto half-castes."⁴⁹ Instead of banning conversions of slaves, the mahamad attempted to control them:

No person shall – except with the permission of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad – circumcise a stranger or admit a strange woman to the Theuilah, under penalty of being separated from the nation and fined fifty florins. And if that person be a slave, he shall not be circumcised without first having been freed by his master, so that the master shall not be able to sell him from the moment the slave will have bound himself [to Judaism].⁵⁰

The last provision constituted a nimble response to the specific exigencies of the Brazilian slave economy, in which some Jewish merchants routinely possessed enormous numbers of slaves temporarily before selling them off. The new provision did not so much ensure the potential slave convert that his/her conversion would guarantee manumission, but made certain that "Jewish" slaves would not be sold to non-Jews. The provision effectively penalized any master who circumcised his slaves before manumission. Whether protective of the slave's interest or exclusive for the sake of the Jewish community, the provision went directly contrary to the *Shulkhan Arukh* and the positions of other poskim.⁵¹ In any event, it placed a hardship on observant masters in a slave economy such as Brazil. It is possible that this postponement of conversion until after manumission derived from the trend among Iberian ecclesiastical authorities to

conduct baptism only when slaves showed a passable level of religious devotion and knowledge (described in Chapter 8).

In the London community, the mahamad acted from the outset to control the conversion of any foreigner. The language of a stipulation from the first meeting of the communal board in 1663 read as follows:

No person who is not of our nation, Portuguese and Spaniards, may be circumcised, and no Mohel [= ritual circumciser] shall be allowed to circumcise them, under pain of Herrem [= excommunication]; and those who should contravene this Escama [= ordinance], as well as any persons who may know it, shall be bound to declare it to the Mahamad, under the same penalty; and under the said penalty is included any one who may bathe a foreign woman, because it is not meet that they be admitted into our congregation.⁵²

While not explicitly aimed at slaves or servants, such an ordinance clearly impinged on the halakhic necessity of circumcising male slaves and ritually immersing females. It "is not meet" to accept converts. Certainly the communal board worried about the potential dangers of converting Christians in general.⁵³ But as will be seen, such language typified communal legislation regarding servants. Within a decade the mahamad, meeting in 1671, prohibited both "the acceptance of proselytes" and "the employment, even temporarily, of maids who had been converted to Judaism."⁵⁴

It is difficult to tell whether in practice slaves of Western Sephardim were in fact circumcised or immersed for either slavery or conversion. Circumcision records, one potential source, pose certain difficulties.⁵⁵ They must be carefully cross-checked with other sources. The mention of a slave or servant appears to be highly exceptional. Rare immersions and conversions in Amsterdam are mentioned in community records, such as that of a Muslim maidservant, or Sara, a serving woman in the house of Yosef Zarfati who converted in 1688.⁵⁶ It is not even clear whether other "aberrations" such as illegitimate children were routinely included, though they sometimes seem to be. Their inclusion or exclusion probably depended on the moral and stylistic character of the recording *mohel*. For instance, the circumcision book of Amsterdam *mohel* Mosseh Abrabanel, spanning the years 1693 to 1725, mentioned for the year 1704 "Joseph the natural son of Semuel Aguabranca 19. Nissan 23. April."⁵⁷ This marked the sole such entry for a period of over thirty years. Such unusual annotations were deemed necessary to explain socially disparaged births, that is, out of wedlock and/or by servant women. Considerably more difficult is proving births or circumcisions left out of the records or hidden in neutral terminology.

None of the early circumcision registers for Amsterdam mentioned the circumcision of slaves, servants, Blacks, or mulattos.⁵⁸ As stated in Chapter 3,

the number of servants or slaves buried in the Jewish cemetery of Amsterdam (not more than 15 for the years 1614–30 and 1680–1716, almost exclusively women) indicates that most such domestic staff remained unconverted and would not have received burial within the Jewish cemetery. In this light, the “zeal” noted in the Amsterdam merchant Diogo Dias Querido for “attempt[ing] to convert . . . even his slaves to the Jewish faith” becomes clear: Such cases constituted a small minority.⁵⁹

For England we have recourse to very limited data. The Circumcision Register of Isaac and Abraham de Paiba (covering 1715–75), from the manuscript record preserved in the archives of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews’ Congregation of London, made no mention of whether any of those named were slaves, servants, Blacks, or mulattos.⁶⁰ The list of circumcisions from 1679 to 1699, compiled from congregational treasurers’ account books, recorded but a single entry for a “servant of Dr Joseph Pereira,” circumcised during the winter of 1696/7.⁶¹ This provides us one documented case of a servant’s circumcision over a twenty-year time span, a remarkably low figure (keeping in mind that there were 22 male servants of Jews listed on the city’s 1695 census alone).⁶² It remains unclear, however, whether no servants, slaves, or Blacks were circumcised or whether the registers’ composers hid such identities in neutral terminology. For instance, a person bearing a name “Ger” (= convert) or So-and-so son of Abraham or daughter of Sarah might represent a converted slave, but without concrete evidence this would be pure speculation.

The picture in the Dutch and English colonies remains murky, but it seems highly unlikely, especially after the seventeenth century, that Sephardim in the colonies routinely circumcised or converted their slaves (see Chapter 9).

As can be seen from the previous chapters, even Jews in traditional and observant communities in the Mediterranean region often failed to observe halakhot pertaining to the circumcision and/or immersion of slaves. What differed in the movement westward is that communal leaders and rabbis stopped insisting on the necessity of these same halakhot, if not actively discouraging their practice. If circumcision of slaves occurred at all, it was only in the rare cases of the slave’s conversion to Judaism, not at purchase, as traditionally required by most *halakhists* except in certain extenuating circumstances, as described. The halakha in practice among Sephardim in Western Europe and the colonies seems to have made this merely a circumcision performed upon voluntary conversion. This trajectory stood both in accord with and in contrast to the “Converso” belief described by Miriam Bodian about the “religio-ethnic defining power of circumcision” when it came to the masters themselves.⁶³ Thus, Amsterdam R. Saul Levi Morteira compared circumcision to the possession of a certificate of *hidalguía* (nobility).⁶⁴ In the case of (ex-)Conversos, the Amsterdam “rabbis frequently cooperated in making circumcision a precondition for full acceptance

in ‘Portuguese’ communities.”⁶⁵ It is possible that the very sacramental and salvational status accorded to circumcision in some Converso circles precluded its being shared with Others deemed unworthy, such as Black and mulatto slaves.

To understand the transformation of practice around this halakha, then, we turn to issues never brought up in the literature treating the question of whether or not to circumcise one’s slaves: the increasing correlation of servitude and skin color. Indeed, a certain irony attends the trend of the suppression of circumcision with westward movement. While in Europe external pressures operated against the conversion or circumcision of Christians, who might be servants in Jewish households, across the Atlantic far less concern existed about the conversion or circumcision of Black slaves to Judaism, since the Christianization of these slaves itself remained an ambivalent goal. Instead, the pressure stemmed from internal transformations in Sephardic self-identity.

SOME MOMENTS OF INCIPIENT AUTOETHNOGRAPHY

Despite the discursive silence, the increasing reluctance and discomfort surrounding the admission of slaves into Judaism correlated directly with the blackening of the slave population and the rising importance for Jews of seeing themselves and having themselves seen as White. Contra Robert Cohen and other scholars, early modern Jews were not automatically White. Each age, perhaps, needs to work out its own scheme of ethnic relations, part of which often entails the production of a color hierarchy. Much evidence shows that both Jews and non-Jews during the early colonial era were ambivalent about the “racial” status of Jews.

There are some medieval Jewish expressions to the effect that Jews were seen in Europe as black and ugly, keeping in mind that Blackness or Whiteness is always a relative matter. Indeed, the metaphysical reading one text gave to this color scheme reflects the polemical usages such physical theories acquired (perhaps always had). The thirteenth-century text of polemics by R. Yosef b. Natan Ofitsial and the *Sefer Nitsahon Yashan*, a “guide” for Jews disputing Christians, probably written in early fourteenth-century German lands, contain nearly identical answers to charges of Jewish ugliness and blackness:

The heretics [i.e., Christians] ask and say: Why are the majority of gentiles [i.e., Christians] white and attractive while the majority of Jews are black and ugly? Reply to them that it is comparable to fruit: when it begins to blossom it is white, after it is finished, then it turns black, as with sloes and plums. And every fruit that is red to begin with, when it is done, is white, as with apples and pears [or apricots]. And this is testimony for Israel that they are pure of menstrual blood and there is here

no blood at the start. But for the gentiles who are not careful to avoid menstruation and have sex at the time when they are menstruating, there is red at the start – therefore the fruit that comes from this, the children, are white.⁶⁶

In nearly identical manner, according to the thirteenth-century *Sefer Yosef ha-Mekaneh*, because “we [Jews] are from a clean and white seed, therefore our faces are black, but you, from the red seed of menstruation, therefore your visages are pale and reddened.”⁶⁷ It may well be that this “charge” that Christians saw Jews as black and ugly was invented and that it reveals more about Jewish self-image than about how Christians actually saw them.⁶⁸ Yet similar reactions to the foreignness and darkness of Muslims can be found from more or less the same period in Wolfram von Eschenbach’s *Parzival*, where it was stated that a child born of a Christian-Muslim couple came out mottled white and black.⁶⁹ One Christian writer depicted the much-reviled “Jewish” Pope Anacletus II (elected in 1130) as physically deformed, stinking with the Jewish odor, and “dark and pale, more like a Jew or an Arab than a Christian.”⁷⁰

Early modern non-Jews in western Europe also appeared to be confused or ambivalent about the color status of Jews. The English Sir William Brereton visited one of the Sephardic synagogues in Amsterdam in 1635 and wrote that the Jewish men were “most black . . . and insatiably given unto women.”⁷¹ In 1643 Isaac de la Peyrère contended that once the Jews convert to Christianity, they “will no longer have this dark complexion . . . they will change faces, and the whiteness of their complexion will have the same brightness as . . .”⁷² An Englishman, John Greenhalgh, visited the Jews’ Synagogue in London and wrote a friend about it in 1662, describing the “chief Ruler” – probably the president of the *parnasim* – as “a very rich merchant, a big, black, fierce, and stern man.”⁷³ At the letter’s end, Greenhalgh reiterated with ethnographic precision that the hundred or so Jews he saw at the synagogue “are all generally black so as they may be distinguished from Spaniards or native Greeks, for the Jews hair hath a deeper tincture of a more perfect raven black.”⁷⁴ In 1690, the Rev. Robert Kirk of Aberfoyle visited the same Creechurch-Alley Synagogue, ending his depiction of the worship with almost identical ethnographic punctuation: “They were all very black men, and indistinct in their reasoning as gipsies.”⁷⁵ Similar portrayals continued into the eighteenth century and later. William Black, secretary of commissioners appointed by Gov. William Gooch of Virginia to deal with the Indians, described Hester Levy, a daughter of “the wealthiest and best known” New York Jew, Moses Levy,⁷⁶ whom he met in June 1744, as “very well Made her Complexion Black but very Comely she had two Charming Eyes and well turn’d, with a Beautiful head of Hair, Coal Black.”⁷⁷ As late as 1753, during the debate in England over that year’s Jewish Naturalization Act, one polemicist suggested that anyone

who wanted to look Jewish should rub herself with walnut husks “to fix such an indelible hue . . . and make you complete olive beauties” with “a lively complexion like that of a new Negro from the coast of Guinea.”⁷⁸ Lady Maria Nugent, visiting an 1803 theater performance in Jamaica’s Spanish Town, explicitly separated Jews and Whites in her depiction of the audience members, who “were of all colours and descriptions; blacks, browns, Jews, and whites.”⁷⁹

Already in 1691, François-Maximilian Mission, one of the influences for Buffon’s *Natural History*, wrote against such views of Jewish blackness, while bolstering in the process the impression that the idea was not uncommon:

Tis also a vulgar error that the Jews are all black; for this is only true of the Portuguese, who, marrying always among one another, beget Children like themselves, and consequently the Swarthiness of their complexion is entail’d upon their whole Race, even in the Northern Regions. But the Jews who are originally of Germany, those, for example, I have seen at Prague, are not blacker than the rest of their countrymen.⁸⁰

Toward the latter end of the eighteenth century, one finds this same changeability of the Jews expressed in updated nuances and geographic context. The Rev. Samuel Stanhope Smith wrote that “[t]he Jews are fair in Britain and Germany, brown in France and in Turkey, swarthy in Portugal and Spain, olive in Syria and in Chaldea, tawney or copper-coloured in Arabia and in Egypt.”⁸¹

Perhaps the best indication that the valences involved in such distinctions also conveyed *metaphysical* import is the title of a mid-seventeenth-century English translation of a conversionary tract aimed at Jews by the formerly Jewish “Samuel of Morocco”: *The Blessed Jew of Morocco: or, A Blackmoor Made White Being a Demonstration of the True Messias out of the Law and Prophets by Rabbi Samuel* (York: Thomas Broad, 1649).⁸² Christian thought, especially among Iberians, often equated Jews and Blacks in a moral manner. The fifteenth-century Portuguese poet Alvaro de Brito Pestana explicated the term *marrano* in the following lines punning on the general negative meaning of *negro*:

Sam marranos os que marran
nossa fe, mui infieis,
bautizados,
que na Lei Velha, s’amarram
dos negros Abravaneis
dotrinados
/Those who fake our faith are the marranos, very faithless/
baptized, who to the Old Law are bound, by the black Abravaneis
indoctrinated.⁸³

Jews and blackness or Blacks became linked in Iberian discourse for their supposedly heritable and indelible characteristics. Padre Mestre Gaspar dos Reis, designated by the Portuguese Inquisition in the 1640s to engage the accused "judaizer" Isaac de Castro in theological debate and convince him to renounce Judaism, got nowhere with the youth, as was true of all the others appointed for the same end. With frustration the priest concluded, citing Jeremiah (13:23), that "it seemed to him that it is impossible for the Jews to repent of their errors, as it is impossible for the Black to change his skin or the leopard to change his spots, and thus he judged the youth [Isaac de Castro] obstinate and pertinacious."⁸⁴

At times, these (meta)physical linkages could be explicitly genetic. In *The Merchant of Venice* (Act 3, Scene 2), first printed in 1600, Shakespeare had Shylock "swear/To Tubal and to Chus, his countrymen,/That he would rather have Antonio's flesh/Than twenty times the value of the sum/That he did owe him." Chus, that is, Cush, the progenitor of Black Africans, here became a "countryman" of the Jew in "primitive" vengefulness and spite.⁸⁵ In some parenthetical remarks in the prologue to his English translation of the *Geographical Historie of Africa* of Leo Africanus, John Pory wrote:

About the fountaines of the Nilus some say, that there are . . . the people called Cafri or Cafates, being as blacke as pitch, and of a mightie stature, and (as some thinke) descended of the Jewes; but now they are idolators, and most deadly enemies to the Christians; for they make continuall assaults upon the Abassins, dispoiling them both of life and goods: but all the day-time they lie lurking in mountaines, woods, and deepe valleies.⁸⁶

This confused report of the interreligious wars and power struggles of Ethiopia presented an unambiguous image of "the Jew." The Black Cafris descended from the Jews, who were themselves Black, or else the Cafris' descent into idolatry and bestial living entailed as well their turning Black, either reading highly plausible. But the current, outer hatred of these formerly Jewish Blacks for Christianity and civilized society reflected in this view only a logical development of the now-repressed inner hatred Jews bore toward Christendom.

The male Jew's ancestral and spiritual allegiance was usually painted in dark and threatening tones, as in Ludovico Ariosto's comedy *Il Negromante* (The Necromancer), first presented in 1529 in Ferrara. The title character is a coniving fraud, jack-of-all-unrespectable-trades. His servant, Nibbio, describes him to the audience as follows:

Like gypsies, we go from place to place, and wherever he passes he leaves his imprint like a snail or, for a more fitting comparison, like fire or lightning; and in each place, in order to disguise himself, he changes his name,/[and says he's from

another country — first version of the play] his dress, and his country./Now he calls himself Peter, now John; now he pretends to come from Greece, now from/[Egypt, now from some other country] Africa./In reality, he's a Jew, and he was among those who were expelled from Castile. It would be a long story if I were to tell you how many men he has cheated and robbed; how many poor homes he has broken up, how many he has tainted with adultery by pretending that he would make barren wives pregnant or by pretending to remove suspicion and discord that arise between husbands and wives.⁸⁷

That Ariosto presented the play in Ferrara, where a large community of ex-*Conversos* resided, can be no coincidence. His harping on the Jews' dissembling of national origins also reflected common conceptions, as did his choices of countries under Ottoman or Islamic rule, allying the Jew with the enemy of Christendom.⁸⁸ Indeed, the Jew could seem either European or non-European at will, and his swarthinness played no small role in this, perhaps leading Ariosto to change the more specific "Egypt" of the play's first version to the more generic "Africa" of the final draft.

While such views may be passed off as mere descriptive statements about the darkness of Sephardic Jews, they soon connected intimately with prescriptive notions based on the significance of physiological or "racial" characteristics. Thus, in a 1750 petition from Kingston, Jamaica, Christians objecting to a recent attempt by a Jewish landowner to vote, presented the following argument:

[T]hough a mulatto of the fourth descent may vote at elections, yet the Jews (many of whom are mulattoes of that degree) are, by our wise legislature, absolutely excluded from that privilege, it being expressly enacted, that they, the said mulattoes, shall enjoy all the privileges and immunities of his majesty's white subjects of this island, provided that they are brought up in the Christian religion; it being also unlawful to employ any Jew in any of the offices of record, . . . they being put, in that regard, on the foot of mulattoes and negroes, by an act of the governor, council, and assembly, of this island.⁸⁹

Note the lack of stability in the Jews' "color" and the overlap of cultural and physiological Otherness: Many of the Jews were mulattos of the fourth degree, that is, very light-skinned Blacks, and hence should have been permitted to vote, but Jews were not Christians, unlike mulattos; the religious exclusion of Jews put them on the level of mulattos and Blacks. Jews both were and were not Blacks, were and were not Whites.⁹⁰ These various views of Jews branded them, in David Roediger's terminology, as "not yet white."⁹¹

The Jewish gaze outward ramified significantly on internal perceptions as well. The effort to clarify the blackness of Jews helped shape some seminal moments in the development of Jewish autoethnography.⁹² Medieval Jewish

responses to observed differences in skin color took on an apologetic tone, as seen from these sources, linking inner purity, beauty, and goodness with outer darkness, lowliness, and oppression. Judah Rosenthal cited a medieval manuscript of polemics advising Jews accused of being uglier than Christians to retort that "before our Temple was destroyed we were more attractive."⁹³ On the basis of Isaiah 52:14-15, medieval Jewish exegetes agreed with their Christian and Muslim compatriots that Jews were darker than their neighbors, arguing that this difference resulted from the melancholia of the Jews.⁹⁴

Many Jewish writers concerned with the Lost Ten Tribes used color as one indicator in their panoply of measures of the identity, authenticity, and status of "exotic" Jews. The Italian rabbi Ovadia da Bertinoro wrote (ca. 1487) that he himself saw two Jews from Ethiopia who had been bought as slaves by Jews in Cairo and redeemed: "[T]hey were a little black, only not so black as the Kushites."⁹⁵ Describing in a letter of 1488 the land of Aden, Ovadia said that "[i]ts inhabitants are somewhat black." It is unclear if this included the Jews residing there or not.⁹⁶ A mid-sixteenth-century letter of R. Yisrael of Jerusalem to R. Avraham of Perusha (Italy) similarly described a prisoner ransomed by the Alexandrian Jewish community, who related "signs and wonders" regarding the kingdom of the Jewish tribes. This prisoner may very well have been David ha-Reuveni, the so-called messianic pretender. At first the prisoner was said to be "almost like a Kushite."⁹⁷ Yet it is very unclear from this text just who was a Kushite and who was not: The prisoner was described as "the Kushite," yet the (not quite Kushite) prisoner seems to have been "the Kushite" with whom some well-to-do Ethiopian Jews left on their mission.⁹⁸

While the efforts to fix the status of these various "exotic" Jews and Jewish communities come across as relatively neutral ethnographic observations, others possessed more ethnocentric overtones. Harold Brackman cited the fascinating and revealing emendations made to the color scheme of Noah's three sons that appeared in the first printed editions of the early medieval text *Pirkei d'Rabbi Eliezer*.⁹⁹ Shem, originally "black and pleasing" in earlier manuscripts, was Europeanized, becoming "white and pleasing." Ham's description, "black as a crow," was evidently deemed too ambiguous and was changed to "black and ugly." Yefet, whose whiteness originally signified a lack, now had his whiteness transformed to correspond with the new ideals of European beauty. He became "entirely white and beautiful." Brackman, unclear on when these changes were made, wrote that these editorial revisions were in place by the sixteenth century. From a thorough review of many manuscripts and early printed editions, I suspect that these changes derive from the sixteenth century itself. The second edition's table of contents differed from the passage within, the one containing the color changes, the other not. The discrepancy evinces a responsible editorial hand contemporary with the printing – the first three editions date from 1514

(Constantinople), 1544 (Venice), and 1567 (Sabbioneta). This desire of some Jews to clarify their own color had everything to do with their "white" cultural surroundings. Indeed, the medieval author of the *Nitsahon Yashan* had provided a second retort to the charges of Jewish ugliness and Blackness, which hinted at the increasing admiration (however begrudging) of European aesthetic norms and values: "And one should also answer: the gentiles are fornicators and have sex during the day and see the faces in beautiful paintings and give birth in their image, as it is written: 'And the sheep conceived when they came to drink before the rods' (Gen. 30:38-39)."¹⁰⁰

Despite external resistance, early modern Sephardim of the upper classes hewed away at the previously emphasized medieval difference between Jews and Christians. As has been often noted, much of the Sephardic self-image was constructed with the same tools and materials as that of Christian Iberians. Scholars have long touted the extraordinary degree of Sephardic assimilation into and fluency with general Iberian cultures from high to low. Already the generations before the expulsions had thoroughly integrated "secular" and Jewish, theological and philosophical speculation.¹⁰¹ The messianism of Shlomo Molkho and other crypto-Jews and former Conversos showed immense overlaps with Spanish and Portuguese Christian millenarianism.¹⁰² Yosef Yerushalmi and others have demonstrated the degree to which Sephardic secular literatures after the expulsions reflected contemporary European and especially Iberian literary and aesthetic standards – "Calderón, Góngora, Quevedo," listed by Bodian as recurrent citations.¹⁰³ Some elite Iberian Jews and Conversos aspired to and claimed noble lineages; they insisted on their own purity of blood.¹⁰⁴ Bodian wrote of "the impulse to continue Iberian sociointellectual patterns" among the Amsterdam Sephardim.¹⁰⁵ Portuguese remained the predominant language among Amsterdam Sephardim until the late eighteenth century and among Curaçaoan Jews until the mid-nineteenth century.

In the era of the formation and solidification of European national identities, the color, ethnicity, and social status of Jews caused no small amount of anxiety among Jews. In these centuries, chronicler Eliahu Capsali told readers, people who had never seen a Jew imagined "that he lacked the form of a man."¹⁰⁶ Shlomo ibn Verga assumed that "the Christian imagines that the Jew is but a human-shaped animal."¹⁰⁷ As David S. Katz phrased it regarding England, the Jews were "strangers . . . in religion, in language, in appearance, and in habits."¹⁰⁸ In northern Europe and its colonial territories, where many of the Sephardim fled, the issue of complexion must have contributed, especially among the elite, to "the clarity of cultural difference setting off the 'Portuguese' from their surroundings," in Bodian's felicitous phrasing.¹⁰⁹ Remember that François-Maximilian Mission had (in the 1690s) rebuked the error "that the Jews are all black; for this is only true of the Portuguese [emphasis added]." Portuguese Jews

were black, then, according to even Mission. Perhaps, then, more lies under the surface than usual in the former Converso Ishac Cardoso's resorting to the proverbial line from Song of Songs (1:6) in the Dedication of his famous work of apologetics, *Las Excelencias de los Hebreos*: "Negro yo, y hermosa, no me miredes por que yo denegrada, que me ennegreció el sol / I am black but beautiful; do not look at me because I am blackened/degraded, because the sun blackened me."¹¹⁰ Was it such equations of Jews and Blackness that inspired some Jews to argue their own Whiteness?¹¹¹ It is probable that such usages were not merely metaphorical in the general moral sense.

These discourses, Jewish and non-Jewish, continued to link outer appearances with inner character. "If the Spanish were the best of all physical types," stated Frederick P. Bowser, "then the African was 'near' (*próximo*), as a royal decree [of the 1540s] phrased it."¹¹² John Francis Gemelli Careri, a lawyer who left Naples in 1683 to travel around the world, described at one point, toward the end of his 600-page account of the journey, the village of San Lorenzo de los Negros in New Spain:

This Place being all Inhabited by Blacks, looks like some part of *Guinea*, but they are handsom, and apply themselves to Husbandry. They are descended from some run-away Slaves; and they were afterwards permitted to remain free, upon Condition they should not entertain any more fugitive Blacks, but restore them to their Owners; which they religiously observe.¹¹³

These Blacks, whose "civility" was proved by their adhering to a social contract to cease aiding and abetting resistance to the slave economy, possessed a more pleasing appearance than their "uncivilized" cousins in Africa. John Gemelli Careri's text thematized this link: "but they are handsome, and apply themselves to Husbandry"; their attractiveness went along with their "productivity," indeed existed *because* of it. Conversely, English traveler to the East Henry Blount noted that the distinctive Jewish appearance derived from "wallowing in the dirt, and Sunne makes them more swarthy then others."¹¹⁴ Race, as these usages testify, was always a portmanteau term. Lancelot Addison made distinctions between some of the components of race in his famous 1675 book-length description of the Jews of the Maghreb: "The Jews in this continent much resemble the Spaniard and *Portuguez* in their stature and complexion, but are much different in their nature and disposition, as being more flexible and sequacious, especially in things whereby they may reap advantage."¹¹⁵

Sephardi apologists sometimes produced a similarly "racial" discourse of superiority. Menasseh ben Israel resorted to the same rhetorical strategy in his oft-quoted dissociation of the Jews and Native Americans. The latter could not descend from the former, since "the Jews were the best disposed people, of the most handsome looks and the most beautiful understanding in the

world; how then could these be the Indians, who lack all of this: [being] ugly in body and with rude understanding?"¹¹⁶ Menasseh's dissociation of Jews and Indians aimed directly at the "more widely-held opinion" that the American Indians descended from Jews, since the Indians "are fearful, ungrateful, weak, superstitious, shrewd, and lying: all properties of Jews."¹¹⁷ Ishac Cardoso, citing Menasseh ben Israel, declared in good classical fashion the beloved and perfect characteristics of the Jews to be "beauty, strength, honor, science, wisdom, children and wealth, in which are enclosed all the things that make a person happy, as regarding a beautiful body and strength, as regarding the external goods, honor and wealth, as regarding the goods of the soul, science and wisdom."¹¹⁸ Daniel Levi (Miguel) de Barrios's history of the Amsterdam Sephardic community comprises an amazing hodgepodge of genealogical and other efforts to glorify the Jewish descendants of Shem. Noah acclaimed God the creator, who was "not [the God] of Iamphet, nor of Cham, but rather of Sem, because Sem conveyed his true knowledge to the Hibrim," the Jews. Elsewhere Barrios exerted himself in refuting genealogical linkage between the Jews and the Indians or Ethiopians.¹¹⁹ Barrios was writing against such authors as the Mantuan Jesuit Antonio Possevino (ca. 1533–1611), who had cited Prester John as an authority for the fact that the Abyssinians in general originated from Solomon and their aristocracy from Abraham.¹²⁰ Bernardo José Aldrete (1565–1645), canon of the church at Cordoba, had argued that ancient Hebrew had (d)evolved into Ethiopian after the exile of the Jews to that locale.¹²¹ Ancient writers, including Sulpicius Severus (ca. 360–ca. 425), had argued that the barbarian nations, such as the Parthians, Medes, Indians, and Ethiopians, descended from the Jews.¹²² But the early modern writers, including Barrios, probably were influenced by the appearance of the first Spanish translations of the Ethiopian royal chronicles, the *Kebra Nagast*, which detailed the Solomonic ancestry of the Christian kings of Ethiopia.¹²³ De Barrios's distancing of Jews from Ethiopians was no mere genealogical exercise, but part of vividly living Iberian polemics about the cultural status of Jews, as is evident from its odd appearance in a history of the Sephardim of Amsterdam.

Both the Jewish and general discourses in which Sephardic Jews participated glorified Whiteness and denigrated Blackness.¹²⁴ The constellation of significations surrounding Whiteness linked it to noble status, purity, and good looks. Wielding ancient literary convention, several sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors asserted that Adam and Noah – and presumably their wives – from whom sprang all humanity, had possessed White skin.¹²⁵ In one poem, the seventeenth-century Converso poet Antonio Enríquez Gómez had the first man, Adam, describe Eve with many of the topoi of Whiteness known to the rhetorical purse: "Beautiful mistress of mine, on whose snowy whiteness the dawn moves," "Lily, pristine white and fair, who amid coral keeps her store of

the pure crystal waters," "The golden tresses of your hair appear as a flock of goats," and "The whiteness of Aurora is your handsome towerlike neck, and of ten lilies are composed your beautiful hands of white."¹²⁶ Although Eve's response to Adam played with Song of Songs 5:11 ("... his hair is curled and black as a raven"), Enríquez "omits the 'vulgar' reference to the raven and portrays the lover as fair headed."¹²⁷ Idealized White skin faced both physical and metaphysical threats. Madrid-born ex-*Converso* Abraham Pereyra included among the corporeal ravages of old age the fact that "the white hands are turned the color of ash."¹²⁸ Pure hands, as aphoristic logic had it, were white; contaminated with sin, they blackened: "[N]o matter how white your hands are, if you handle carbon they have to get sooty."¹²⁹

The plethora of Ladino (Judeo-Spanish) songs include not a few in which the heroes and heroines consistently drew White characterizations and the villains lowly Black attributes. One lyric, "Tarquino y Lucrecia," featured a cuckolded husband threatening to avenge an affair of his wife by killing her in bed alongside one of her Black slaves, thus destroying her reputation.¹³⁰ Consider also the old and widespread song adopted by the Sephardic Jews, "Moren(ic)a me llaman":

Morena me llaman, yo blanca nací.
De pasear galana, mi color perdí.
Morena me llama el hijo del rey.
Si otra vez me llama, con él me iré.

/They call me dark, [but] I was born white/From walking as a virgin
[in the sun] I lost my color/Dark the king's son calls me/If he calls
me so another time I'll go off with him.¹³¹

This lyric was known on the Iberian peninsula from early *cancioneros* (= song books) and partakes of the genre of lyrics defending dark-haired and dark-skinned women. The great Spanish playwright Lope de Vega's *Servir a señor discreto* recorded a seventeenth-century form. The Sephardic song's initial couplet, attested in various early *cancioneros*, connected the problematic exterior hue to an internal moral tarnish:

Aunque soy morena,
blanca yo nací:
guardando el ganado
la color perdí.

/Though I'm dark/ I was born white./Watching cattle/I lost my color.¹³²

The couplet's darkening is meant to play punningly with the different meaning of the cognate terms *ganado* (cattle) and *ganar* (to earn, to profit, etc.). My reading finds corroboration in a statement made by a scholar treating a "crypto-Jewish" novel of sixteenth-century Portugal, in which the hero "says that he went to

'the fields of the Tejo' (i.e., Lisbon) to 'rescue his cattle,' which, in the pastoral code means that he went to improve his worldly situation."¹³³ In the Ladino ballad, then, the Jewish visage is darkened by material desires.

Whiteness took on additional significance with increased Iberian conflict with Muslims and then increased conflict with other non-European peoples.¹³⁴ It acquired most importance in colonial territories, where such conflicts took on a demographic and not merely a conceptual character, one that remained persistent and required stark segregation of sides. Rebellious millenarian slaves in 1580s Brazil, both Amerindian and Black, were already employing this vocabulary. They believed and certainly hoped that "God was coming now to free them from their captivity and to make them lords of the white people," as one informant to the Lisbon Inquisition put it.¹³⁵ By the sixteenth and certainly by the seventeenth century, Whiteness carried quite real social effects in the colonies of every European power and in the metropolises of an increasing number of European colonial powers: It might well determine what professions you could practice, what organizations you could join, and whom you could marry. Mem de Sá (d. 1572), governor of Brazil, included in his will a provision allowing a share in his inheritance only to descendants who married a White, Old Christian.¹³⁶

A few direct summonings by Jews of Whiteness surfaced in the seventeenth century. These point to an abstract but operative concept among some Jews of Whiteness as indicator of status, respectability, attainment. For a reason left unclear by the documentation, Manuel Nunes, a Portuguese merchant of Amsterdam, required in 1610 corroboration of his social stature. Perhaps some questions about his genealogy threatened his status in (entry into?) the "Portuguese nation" in Amsterdam. Financial difficulties may have stood behind his need, as on 19 May of that year, another merchant, Hendrik Broen (later a director of the West India Company), had notarized a registration of protest of nonpayment by Nunes for a bill of exchange.¹³⁷ So, on 15 September, no fewer than six other Sefardim, friends or associates acting on Nunes's initiative, appeared before a notary public.¹³⁸ They declared "that Manuel Nunes is the son of Fernão Rodrigues and Leonor Nunes... in Lisbon and that he is the son of a white father and mother and that neither of them have any part Morisco [blood] nor [the blood] of Blacks."¹³⁹ In order to assuage his debtors and doubters, Nunes had some associates record an official statement of his "quality," which, not coincidentally, emphasized his social and inherited "purity." One wonders about the exact formulation. The general source of the terminology existed in the standard contemporary Portuguese discourse about "purity of blood." Perhaps the intended audience of this declaration resided in Iberian Catholic territories, and it is they who would have worried about Nunes's blood lines. Yet the terminological evocation of Nunes's friends



FIGURE 4. Illustrated medical license issued to Ya'akov b. Sh'muel of Trieste, 1684. Property of the U. Nahon Museum of Italian Jewry, Jerusalem. Printed by permission of the museum.

neglected, obviously, his Jewish blood; in other words, it specified just which elements of the blood-purity discourse these Sephardim found useful in the Amsterdam outpost of the Iberian commercial empire.

Another summoning of Jewish Whiteness, no less significant despite its coming from a non-Jewish source, emerges from a license to practice medicine awarded in 1684 by the University of Padua to Ya'akov b. Sh'muel Levi of Trieste (Figure 4).¹⁴⁰ This doctor's certificate presents a diptych whose borders are thick with a colorful riot of ornately drawn plants, insects, and peacocks. In the center of the right panel stands the Latin text declaring the recipient's approval by the University Senate. In the center of the left panel, a portrait of what I assume must be the young Jewish graduate – pale and clothed in the modest, somber garb of a physician – has been painted into a laurel wreath, which in turn is held aloft by a Black servant dressed in a colorful, exotic outfit. The symbolism speaks clearly: The White physician rides on the support of the Black servant and medicinal plants, both products extracted from exotic locales. This certificate presumably represents a standard template, into which each graduate's portrait was then painted (the stylistic difference cannot be missed). Jews, who increasingly were allowed to study medicine at European universities in the seventeenth century, could take advantage of an educational and economic

system built on the backs of excluded non-Whites, could construct their own status as Whites.¹⁴¹

Finally, R. Saul Levi Morteira's description of the base social status of the soldiers fighting with the Portuguese against the Dutch and Jews in Brazil, quoted in Chapter 5, comprises an implicit arrangement of Jews as Whites.¹⁴² He deemed the inclusion of these enemies' lowly status – beginning with "blacks, mulattos . . ." – as critical to his argument positing the Jews as especially favored by God, as noble, pure, and, effectively, unlike their base Brazilian enemy's minions, as White.

I am not trying to link the many citations included here into a linear development of Jewish Whiteness. Rather, statements about Jewish Whiteness emerged when and where specific forces made them useful, important. Such was not the case everywhere. For instance, R. Berehya Baruh b. Yitshak Izak Shapira (d. 1664; Cracow, Constantinople) cited in a sermon the previously discussed passage from Pirkei d'Rabi Eliezer, leaving intact the original color scheme for the three sons of Noah (Shem = black and pleasing, Ham = black as a raven, Yefet = entirely white), which evidently posed no problem for him.¹⁴³ In seventeenth-century Sephardic Amsterdam, however, the intellectual, emotional, and theological prioritization of Whiteness, worries about perceived Jewish Blackness, increasing colonial opportunities and mind-sets, and the anxiety of some congregants over the visibility of Black and mulatto slaves within their own community led to an increased application of Black/White discourse. The efforts of former Converso writers to assert the Whiteness of (Sephardic) Jews, and those of De Barrios to distance Jews from Indians and Ethiopians in his history of the Amsterdam Sephardic community, reflect this context of seeing Jews, Ethiopians, and American Indians as distant relatives, linked often because of their presumed inferiority and superstitious primitivity. Efforts to establish social and administrative distance between Whites and Blacks within the Jewish community arose in seventeenth-century Amsterdam and Cochín, India, themes to be picked up in the next chapter. It was these evidently worrisome themes, I argue, that helped discourage the absorption of non-White slaves into Judaism and the Jewish community.

Inventing Jewish Whiteness

The Seventeenth-Century Western Sephardic Diaspora, Part II

In the mid-seventeenth century, the "Portuguese" Jewish community of Amsterdam instituted a series of communal ordinances that reflected and constructed the desired "racial" transformation of the Jews by gradually excluding non-White Jews and non-White slaves from participation. This legislation accompanied and explains the transformation of attitudes toward the conversion and circumcision of slaves and the drastic decrease of both practices. The Jewish community of seventeenth-century Cochin, on India's Malabar coast and increasingly in the orbit of the Sephardic world, generated similar tensions along phenotypical fault lines. Taken together, these two cases adumbrate the process through which Whiteness became an operative principle in the organization of Jewish communal life in several locations within the Sephardic diaspora.

EXCLUSIONARY PRACTICES IN AMSTERDAM

The first pertinent legislation emerged in 1627. An ordinance was passed restricting access to burial at the community's Ouderkerk cemetery, officially opened only in 1618. The ordinance read, in part: "No black person nor mulatto will be able to be buried in the cemetery, except for those who had buried in it a Jewish mother[;] none shall persuade any of the said blacks and mulattos, man or woman, or any other person who is not of the nation of Israel to be made Jews."¹ Whereas an earlier prohibition had targeted all those born of "foreign" mothers, the 1627 specification of Blacks and mulattos reflected both the reality of their presence as slaves and servants in the Amsterdam Jewish community and the degree to which they were seen to draw negative attention. Records in the Amsterdam municipal archive reflect the perception that "of the first few Blacks who had lived in Amsterdam, most, perhaps all, served Portuguese Jews."² An ordinance passed in 1614 with the initial purchase of the cemetery had already established a separate section "intended especially for

the burial of slaves, servants and 'Jewish girls, who are not of our Nation.'³ Although the motivation in 1627 continued to be *halakhic*, the language had in twelve years become explicitly "racial." Indeed, a 1647 *haskama* created a separate section of the cemetery specifically for Black and mulatto Jews (treated later in this section).

Were such exclusive burial practices in effect elsewhere? No *halakhic* stricture exists on the burial of converted slaves as Jews. Only one case of an actual incident arising out of this issue has come to my attention. In 1555 in Safed, a maidservant was refused burial because of suspicions about her manumission, until a rabbi came before the rabbinic court and clarified the matter.⁴ Halakhically, the segregated burial of those with questionable Jewish status had precedent and, moreover, is understandable. The Catholic Church had likewise long forbade the burial of non-Christians within the consecrated ground of churches.⁵ The Sephardic burial legislation from Amsterdam differed, however, in identifying the problematic cases through their distinct social background.

Racially segregated burial had precedent in the non-Jewish world. A serious gap divided the legal and religious ideal from actual everyday practice, which excluded people from burial within communal cemeteries for religious, rather than strictly ethnic, reasons. A. C. de C. M. Saunders's study of Blacks in Portugal between 1441 and 1555 mentioned no strictly racial exclusion. Usually, noted Saunders, "there were no objections to burying slaves in churchyards and even in the churches themselves," though "[m]unicipal authorization was sometimes necessary for a slave to be buried inside the city." In one town, Aveiro, "some citizens went so far as to inform the Inquisition of a priest who had refused to conduct the funeral of a slave."⁶ Seventeenth-century burial records from a poor neighborhood of Seville show that 22 slaves (out of a total of 873 people) were buried in the local church cemetery between 1618 and 1628; no word anywhere of a separate section, and indeed, masses were said for them.⁷ Ruth Pike wrote of sixteenth-century Seville that as "members of the Christian community, slaves were buried in their parish churches and in some instances in family vaults."⁸ From a 1622 royal decree of the king of Spain to Cartagena de Indias, we can deduce that Black slaves were buried in the city's cathedral cemetery if their owners paid for the expenses.⁹ The French Dominican Jean Baptiste du Tertre, writing just before 1654, asserted that the slaves of the French Caribbean colonies were baptized, legally married, and buried in sacred ground.¹⁰ Indeed, the earliest version of the *Code Noir* (1685) ordained masters to bury slaves in holy ground.¹¹

Pagan slaves in Catholic territories clearly failed to benefit from the rights of members of the religious community. In 1519, a Black slave on one of the Canary Islands testified to local Inquisition authorities regarding his explanations

to institute distinctions within the community, now faced with an influx of "different" outsiders, did not arise ex nihilo. Dutch Protestant planters in Brazil had been making it difficult for their slaves to attend church services as early as, if not earlier than, a 1636 report to that effect by a Dutch Protestant pastor.²⁵

In 1647, a separate section of the Sephardic cemetery was established for "all the Jewish blacks and mulattos." Exceptions were limited to those "who were born in Judaism, [their parents] having [been married] with *quedoshim* [with *kiddushin*, i.e., properly, according to Jewish law], or those who were married to whites with *quedoshim*."²⁶ In other words, very few, if any, Blacks or mulattos now would have qualified for burial in the Jewish cemetery proper. That so many Blacks and mulattos *did* receive burial in the segregated section of the Jewish cemetery after this ordinance (see Chapter 3) reflects a communal rift when it came to treatment of slaves. While the mahamad wished to terminate the inclusion of Blacks and mulattos in Jewish life, others clearly saw fit to continue including them.

An ordinance of 1650 reiterated the *ascama* from the *ascamot* issued with the unification of the three congregations banning the circumcision or ritual immersion of non-Jews. This new pronouncement explicitly targeted Blacks and mulattos and confirmed the earlier penalty of excommunication for their circumcision or ritual immersion:

Renewal of the *escama* of 1639 which treats the circumcizing of *goyim*. The Gentlemen of the *Mahamad* declare that the same penalty of *herem* [the most stringent form of excommunication] [will apply] to any [person] circumcizing Blacks or mulattos and also any immersing them or [any who] should be a witness for them [as required by *halakha*], seeing [their] immersing, or [that of] any other person or woman who is not of our Hebrew nation. The Gentlemen of the *Mahamad*, having some occasion of a son or daughter of a Jew who should come to the [ritual] bath or give birth [?] [and] who should be raised in his house with his [word unclear] may arrange [to do] as he sees fit.²⁷

Clearly, the practice of bringing slaves or former slaves into at least some minimal level of Judaism had continued or such a renewal would not have been deemed necessary. The latter part of the ordinance made an exception for leaders of the community, who could choose whether or not to circumcise or ritually immerse, perhaps in private, any child born to them from a non-Jewish mother (the text defines Jewish parentage with *judeu*, that is, only in the masculine). These wealthy members of the mahamad of course comprised the men most likely to own slaves, while the "occasion" of their siring a child with a female slave remained a prerogative the mahamad did not want to threaten.

The spirit of this particular Sephardic ordinance paralleled, and may have derived from, certain results of the 1618-19 Synod of Dordt. The leaders of

the Reformed Churches gathered there had failed to reach a conclusion on the issue of "whether slaves born in Reformed households should be baptized and of whether baptism would free them," since the latter case would "discourage slaveowners from allowing [baptism]." Ultimately, in the face of disagreement over the consequences of baptism for the slave and master, the Reformed sages "favoured leaving the discretion on whether to baptize to the head of household."²⁸

Yet even in Iberian territories, the religious absorption of slaves was not as uncontested as imagined by scholars. Writing about Andalusian slavery between 1450 and 1550, Alfonso Franco Silva noted that some masters freed their slaves on the condition that they be baptized, indicating that the taking on of this sacrament often remained a voluntary decision.²⁹ As cited in Chapter 2, the Portuguese law code of 1603 even allowed slaves to refuse baptism. On the island of Santo Domingo, some clergymen argued that the baptism of newly arrived slaves should not be automatic, but given only when the slave assumed the mantle of Christian doctrine and understood the significance of God and baptism. This view, whose popularity is undetermined, would have provided far greater latitude for masters and slaves to avoid the latter's Christianization.³⁰ When, in 1614, the archbishop of Seville issued an Instruction calling for the automatic baptism of all slaves departing from African ports on slave ships, it is quite clear that many slaves still had not been receiving baptism, much less any instruction in Christian doctrine.³¹ Yet in 1622, the Provincial Dominican Council on Santo Domingo felt the need to call for an inquisition to investigate the continued failure of many slave traders to have the slaves baptized ("Knowing, from experience, that the Ethiopians, brought from Ethiopia and from other parts of those Indies, lack the benefit of baptism, even though the merchants say, for their part, that they *are* baptized").³² In late-seventeenth-century Toledo, where half of the known slaves were described in records as Black, a mere 7 slave baptisms were noted in the city, a minuscule number even if other slaves received baptism elsewhere.³³ Although the responses differed, the varied and often conflicting interests regarding the religious absorption of slaves comprised a transnational phenomenon.

In 1658, the mahamad decided that mulatto boys would no longer be admitted for study in the Amsterdam *yeshiva* of the Sephardim.³⁴ On the basis of talmudic precedent, Rambam had already prohibited teaching one's slave of Torah.³⁵ These mulattos were not identified as slaves, however, and the worry was not their gaining freedom by means of the study of Jewish law. The issue was their background, and they did not constitute the only such unworthy students, as any non-Sephardic youths were also banned. Beyond the decree's reflection of Sephardic ethnocentricity toward non-Sephardic Jews, such an exclusion of Others considered unworthy from advanced religious education and offices

had other anti-Black precedents. The Jesuit College of St. Peter and St. Paul in Mexico City, founded in 1582, had included in its constitution a clause expressly forbidding the admission of Blacks and mulattos.³⁶ Indeed, since the mid-1500s, full-blooded American Indians and Blacks had not been allowed to receive holy orders or hold sacerdotal office in the viceroyalties of Mexico or Peru.³⁷ By the early seventeenth century, exceptions aside, the Portuguese Jesuits and other religious orders working in the Kongo and Angola "refused to admit either blacks or mulattos to their own ranks, though they did train them at [their] colleges to enter the secular priesthood."³⁸ The 1622 Provincial Dominican Council on Santo Domingo reiterated that "Blacks are not to be admitted to the Sacred Orders . . . nor Ethiopians and other Blacks, vulgarly called mulattos. Because from this, as experience and concrete cases show, originate scandals and scorn of the Church." Neither could Blacks or mulattos "wear the clerical habit" unless they were three generations removed from "the Ethiopian trunk (*tronco*)," that is, if "their ancestors had been of white color and free from all servitude."³⁹ These ordinances from Iberian colonial territories do not exactly parallel the 1658 exclusion from the Sephardic yeshiva, but they established a pattern of segregating non-Whites from attainment of religious knowledge beyond the necessary minimum and from the attainment of religious authority. A reference by J. Melkman stated that the ordinance excluding non-Sephardim from study at the *Ets Haim* yeshiva was "revoked shortly afterwards." I have not found other evidence of this revocation.⁴⁰

Although only one Sephardic community outside of Amsterdam produced ordinances with similarly explicit exclusions, it seems that most such communities in the Americas followed them in practice.⁴¹ Surinamese Sephardim at Jodensavanne promulgated legislation limiting the participation of non-White Jews. As in Amsterdam, this legislation appears not to have come at the outset of the community's history but only later, with the actual existence of Jewish Blacks and mulattos.⁴²

SEPHARDIC AMSTERDAM AND COLONIALISM

The implementation of these various exclusionary practices in Sephardic Amsterdam emerged under the auspices of several factors. The timing of the sequence of rulings, beginning with the 1641 ordinance, makes it in one sense a consequence of the unification of the three Jewish congregations into one in 1639, with the attendant increased public profile and increased desire for order. But from the beginning, Iberian discourse, with its incipient *sistema de castas*, in which these ex-Convertos continued to live and think, drove their actions.⁴³ A third major influence came from the onset of northern European colonial competition with Spain and Portugal and the desire of Jews to participate, to

"prove . . . themselves useful and beneficial," as the English Privileges to the Jews of Surinam in 1665 put it.⁴⁴ The *Historical Essay on the Colony of Surinam* (1788) noted this connection in describing how "David Nassy, his family, and his companions, already accustomed to the climate of Brazil and to the labors of agriculture," decided "to settle anew" in Surinam, since the "mania or the rage to form colonies in the New World was then general."⁴⁵ The Dutch West India Company was itself founded only in June 1621, after some twenty or thirty years of increasing Dutch overseas activity.⁴⁶ By the year of the WIC's founding, wrote Boxer, "there were embryo Dutch settlements, or trading posts, in the Hudson River area, in Guiana and up the Amazon delta," in addition to two or three on the West African coast, while the United Provinces built "between ten and fifteen ships . . . annually . . . exclusively for the Brazil trade."⁴⁷ Settlers from Zeeland resided on the "Wild Coast" as early as 1627, and Dutch colonists lived at Tobago by 1628, while Dutch forces finally captured Pernambuco in 1630.

The Dutch themselves manifested an increasing interest in the supply and marketing of African slaves and color separation as a method of colonial control. Individual Dutch merchants had plied the coastal trade of West Africa, some even holding the *asiento* for supplying the slaves of the Spanish colonies, as early as 1528, although until the seventeenth century, Dutch elites were too busy fighting for the survival of the northern provinces to engage in official slave trading.⁴⁸ In 1623, only two years after the WIC's founding with the end of the Twelve Years' Truce in 1621, the Council of Nineteen was expressing great interest "in that profitable trade in blacks the Portuguese were carrying on" in and from Africa.⁴⁹ "Active" Dutch slave trading began around 1630, according to Johannes Postma, with the conquest of Pernambuco.⁵⁰ Cornelis Goslinga mentioned a commission appointed thereafter to "reconcile the trade in human beings with the doctrines of Calvinistic Christianity," whose findings bent the latter for the sake of the former.⁵¹ With the availability of Curaçao, captured in 1634, to serve as a slave depot in the Caribbean, the Dutch began including in Spanish slave vessels in their net of acceptable targets for privateering.⁵² In 1640, eager to maintain their Brazilian colony's profitability, the Dutch turned to securing supplies of Black slaves. By 1642, the Dutch had captured three major Portuguese trading posts on the West African coast – Mouree (in 1635), São Jorge at Elmina (1637), and Axim (1642) – consolidating the slave-trading monopoly in their hands.

According to Jonathan Israel, by 1620, "most" of the Sephardim living in Amsterdam "were involved in activities related to the import of sugar or other colonial products."⁵³ In the 1630s, and even before, some Sephardim owned sugar plantations in Brazil and refineries around Amsterdam. In 1637, Manval Mendes de Crasto or Manvel Nehemias led a group of 200 Sephardic colonists

from Amsterdam to Brazil in order to found a settlement in the interior. The death of their leader after their arrival in Recife in 1638 caused them to disperse and melt into the city's population.⁵⁴ After the termination of a decade or so of Sephardic experience in Dutch Brazil, some of the colonists resettled in Surinam during the 1640s. By the 1650s, groups of Sephardic Jews were receiving privileges from Western powers to participate directly in colonization efforts.⁵⁵ Interested Jews pressed the European powers to grant them the help of the "required" slave labor as well. As early as 1650, twelve Jewish families received not only permission to settle in Curaçao but also letters addressed to the governor "ordering him to give them sufficient land, and to provide them with negroes, horses, cattle, implements, etc."⁵⁶ In 1658, the wealthy Hamburg Sephardi Abraham Senior Teixeira "offered to grant [Jews] a subsidy to cover traveling expenses . . . to such persons as desire to emigrate to Serepique, a land newly discovered by the Dutch."⁵⁷ By that year, "the Colonization Committee" making plans for Jewish settlement on the Wilde Cust maintained that "negroes would be necessary" for the growing of sugar.⁵⁸ The Dutch and the Jews interested in settling in the Wilde Cust together elaborated a "Rulle" specifying "in What Manner and Condition that the Negroes shall bee Delivered in the Wilde Cust."⁵⁹ Jacob Ieosua Bueno Enriquez petitioned the English king sometime in 1661, in perfect accord with the norms of grants to colonizers, to be allowed to work a copper mine on Jamaica and "that I also should have all the liberties and lands I should want and that [the king] should give me enough Black women [slaves] to form whatever plantations I might."⁶⁰ One of the moments in this sequence of colonial participation certainly comprised the 1657 Dutch step of making the Dutch Jews "subjects of the Netherlands, entitled to the same protection abroad as all native subjects."⁶¹

Indeed, despite the difficulties of identifying them, it is clear that many of the leaders at whose hands the exclusionary Amsterdam ordinances became official, rode the rising commercial colonial tides of The Netherlands. For the parnasim in Recife who promulgated the legislation against circumcision of slaves, their colonial ties brook no doubt about this. The legible signatories to the Amsterdam ordinances were as follows (brackets indicate indecipherable letters):

1641:

Aaron ■ Sen[. . .]
 Joseph da Costas⁶²
 Joseph Abemaca
 Moses Salom⁶³
 Selomo A. Bass[. . .]
 David Is. d'Oliv⁶⁴

1644:

Abraham Salom⁶⁵
 David Herg[as]⁶⁶
 Josef Abeniacar⁶⁷
 Jeosuah Jesurun⁶⁸
 Ishac Belmonte⁶⁹

1647:

Joseph de los Rios⁷⁰
 Moseh de Mesquita⁷¹
 Jeuda Touro⁷²
 Jacob Gabay Faro⁷³
 Selomoh Senior⁷⁴
 Abraham Aboab⁷⁵
 Selomoh Salom⁷⁶

1650:

Isaque Jesurun
 Michael dEspinose⁷⁷
 Abrão [Henriques Faro?]

1658:

Izak Bueno⁷⁸
 David Osorio⁷⁹
 Abraham Telles⁸⁰
 Benjamin Mussaphia⁸¹
 Samuel Salom⁸²
 D.^{or} Efraim Bueno⁸³
 Imanoel [. . .] Drago⁸⁴

These wealthy, cosmopolitan Sephardic leaders in Amsterdam, many of them born and bred as Christians in Spain or Portugal, several of them merchants trading overseas, some of them possibly temporary residents of Dutch Brazil, could not have been unaware of the *sistema de castas* then increasingly regnant in the Iberian colonies, a system of which they knowingly or not constituted a part even in Amsterdam. In many ways, this system in the colonies marked a logical extension of Iberian practices of *limpieza de sangre*, first established in the mid-fifteenth century, and which these former Conversos surely knew intimately as victims.⁸⁵ In R. Douglas Cope's summation of colonial Mexico,

[t]he evolution of the *sistema de castas* is far from clear. . . . Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán states that the *sistema* came into effect during the seventeenth century; John K. Chance believes that it was functioning in Oaxaca by 1630. . . . The parishes of Santa Veracruz and Sagrario Metropolitano [in Mexico City] began to keep separate marriage registers for the castas in 1646.⁸⁶

The non-Jewish examples of exclusionary legislation cited in the previous section show that the fully functional *sistema de castas* had long-standing precedents, both in terms of conceptual segregation of "races" and concrete forms of "racialized" social engineering. Indeed, such practices had reigned increasingly in Spain and Portugal since the sixteenth century.

The racialized social and conceptual system of the Baroque colonial order quickly spread beyond Iberian territories, however. With the 1640 breakup of the unified Iberian powers, seemingly everyone in northern Europe rushed in to exploit the trade in African slaves, such that "the economic consequences began to be felt and the levels of the slave trade rose dramatically."⁸⁷ Country after country organized a company to compete with the Dutch West India Company for the trade with Africa and export of slaves: Sweden's Guinea Company (1647), the Danish West India Company (1671), England's Royal African Company (1672), France's Senegal Company (1673), and the Brandenburg African Company (ca. 1682).⁸⁸ Every colonizing power now hosted a small or large internalized colonial population of native Americans and Africans, whose descendants increasingly mixed with the White colonizers.

In the oscillation between strictly halakhic concerns regarding improper distinction between the free and the enslaved in Sephardic Amsterdam, on the one hand, and ethnic/"racial" separation, on the other, one witnesses the transformation of a discursive system. This transformation within Jewish discourse stood perfectly parallel with the oscillations within Catholic or Protestant societies between religious principles and worldly motivations. That by the 1640s or 1650s the Sephardic leaders of Amsterdam were motivated by extra-halakhic concerns seems beyond doubt. Given the strong barriers drawn between circumcised and uncircumcised in the Sephardic diaspora, that even circumcised Blacks and mulattos should be excluded from public participation at the synagogue bespeaks the vehemence motivating the exclusion.⁸⁹ Indeed, as mentioned earlier, the 1627 ordinance of the mahamad had already discouraged community members from bringing Blacks or mulattos into Judaism, specifically from conducting ritual immersions for them, while the 1650 ordinance decreed an end to the circumcision or ritual immersion of Blacks and mulattos other than illegitimate children or those who narrowly and incorrectly were considered *yelidei bayit*, slaves born into the master's household. For these latter, the mahamad, in 1639 and in 1650, left the decision to circumcise/immerse or not in the hands of the individual master.

The language of the ordinances in Sephardic Amsterdam tells the story of the formation of a local unit of the *sistema de castas*, with all of its dual and contradictory desire (of some Jews for the labor and sexual use of Blacks) and repulsion (by some Jews of Black entry into the community through legal procedure and communal pressure). In 1614, the useful exclusion targeted

the general servile population with some halakhic justification. By 1627, Blacks and mulattos had absorbed the proscription's force. Some Portuguese Jews had effectively brought the *lugar dos negros* of Lisbon to the Jewish cemetery outside of Amsterdam. The 1641 ordinance forbade Black and mulatta serving women from sitting in the first rows of the synagogue's women's section, that is, in the seats reserved for the most prominent community members (seats in the male section were assigned precisely on the basis of "honor") and their gathering in the mornings on the street before the synagogue door. The primacy of the forbidden rows overlapped with the seats whose occupants would most likely be seen by an observer in the main/male section of the synagogue,⁹⁰ while the early morning gathering of female slaves and servants created a perceived public spectacle or nuisance. Furthermore, this pronouncement appeared on 18 Elul of that year, only two weeks before Rosh ha-Shanah, the Jewish New Year, that is, just before the second celebration as a unified congregation of possibly the most significant and public annual communal event.⁹¹ Three years later, the community leaders banned Jewish Blacks and mulattos from performing any ritual role or receiving any honor; that is, they removed Black participation from visibility in the synagogue. By the 1640s and 1650s, those excluded bore no halakhic stigma – the men were admittedly circumcised Jews – but only a phenotypical and hence social one. In the view of society's managers, visible difference required correction through public differentiation. Again, these Sephardic ordinances bore tremendous similarity to the legislation produced under identical pressures elsewhere in the Iberian colonial orbit. In the mid-seventeenth century, Hispaniola's bishop Vara Calderón "found it necessary" to prohibit the hiring of Black and mulatto women to wait at funerals, clearly also seen as unseemly public behavior.⁹²

In short, the language conveying this exclusionary legislation stood as another instance of the international logic of anti-Black thought. The Amsterdam ordinances could have excluded "*avadin/slaves*" of questionable halakhic status, rather than "*negros*" or "*mulatos*." The texts' use of the racial term assumed that it already had come to replace the term "slave." Each of the Sephardic ordinances under discussion had parallels in European colonies in the Americas and evinced similar general anxieties. In 1627, the conversion of Blacks and mulattos, among others, was seen to result in "scandal and offense to God." The giving of honors in the synagogue to Black Jews "does not befit the reputation of the Congregation," read the statute of 1644. So also ran a 1664 Maryland law forbidding "freeborne English women" to marry "Negro slaves," an act seen to be "to the disgrace of our Nation."⁹³ The 1658 exclusion of mulattos and other non-Sephardim from the yeshiva stemmed from worries about "great prejudice" and the "good rearing" of Sephardic boys. So, too, the exclusion of Blacks and mulattos from the Sacred Orders on Santo Domingo sought to

prevent "scandals and scorn" of the Church. The 1703 ordinance implementing yet another special row in the cemetery stated that it was for "Black Jews and other people who appear unworthy of being buried in an ordinary row." These Sephardic ordinances embodied a discourse larger than, or between, ruling groups (a *langue*) uttered this time by certain Jews with their own inflection, context, and intention (*parole*). The origins of the behavior and thought described in this and the previous chapter spanned Jewish and non-Jewish discourses. Jewish behavior was analogous as well as influenced, had internal as well as external causes. The series of Amsterdam Sephardic ordinances did nothing less than instantiate a miscegenation of halakhic worries and the "pigmentocracy" increasingly reigning throughout the Iberian, Dutch, English, and French worlds.⁹⁴

SEPHARDIC WHITENESS IN JEWISH COCHIN

We turn now to another instantiation of Whiteness in seventeenth-century Sephardic life. In the 1680s, one finds certain Jews of Cochin, India, mostly of Sephardic extraction, defining themselves as White, in contrast to other Jews of Cochin who are called Black. This is about the same time that the term "white" became current in the English colony of Virginia.⁹⁵ The term's first use in a Virginia statute "to designate European-Americans as a social category occurred in 1691."⁹⁶ Of course, the trajectory and timing of the color-complex differed in each colonial situation, but it usually reflected a similar mix of clashing Europeans and dark natives, whose darkness turned the former from "Christians" to "Whites." Nancy Shoemaker thought that Barbados, the first slave-dependent English colony, may have been "the first English colony to experience the transition in identity from 'Christian' to 'white.'" Meanwhile, the "Dutch in New Netherland called themselves 'Christian' for the duration of their control over the colony, and the English [there] continued with 'Christian' until about the 1730s, when the term 'white people' began to appear with more frequency. As in Barbados, black slavery seems to have caused the transition from 'Christian' to 'white.'"⁹⁷ Similarly in Cochin, although some local residents and European explorers had described various Jews as "black" or "white" for quite some time, it was not until the seventeenth century that these became categories of social legislation (even of an informal nature) within the Jewish community itself.⁹⁸ The use of these categories in Cochin indeed derived in part from Dutch Sephardic visitors.⁹⁹ Of the most important of these visitors from the perspective of this study, Moses Pereyra de Paiva, very little is known other than that he visited the Jews of Cochin in 1686 and authored a brief report of his experiences, *Noticias dos judeus de Cochim*.

The actual or legendary history of their origins is beyond the scope of this study, but suffice it to say that Jewish communities were clearly established on the Malabar coast by the end of the first millennium.¹⁰⁰ There seems no doubt that there were indeed Jewish "chiefs" or "nobles" at Cranganore, though the town was abandoned for Cochin, some few miles away, between 1344, the first exodus, and 1565, when Jews left en masse.¹⁰¹

Of the medieval references to Jews in India, only one, that of Benjamin of Tudela, mentioned Black Jews.¹⁰² Rambam mentioned the Jews of India in his letter to the rabbis of Lunel, Italy, but only to write them off: "The Jews of India know nothing of the Torah and of the Laws, save the Sabbath and circumcision."¹⁰³ Benjamin of Tudela described the hundred or so black Jews of Khulam (Quilon?) as "good and benevolent. They know the law of Moses and the prophets, and to a small extent the Talmud and Halacha."¹⁰⁴ His description of the 1,000 Jews at Al-Gingaleh, also supposedly located in nearby India – known variously as Cyngilin, Gingalah, Zinglantz, Shinkli, and in Jewish tradition as Shingli¹⁰⁵ – on the other hand, made no mention of their color.¹⁰⁶ Elijah of Ferrara (fifteenth century) mentioned meeting an old man who reported being in India, where the Jews were subject to a gentile king.¹⁰⁷ But that was the extent of his relation about the Indian Jews. Further, none of the early non-Jewish mentions of South Indian Jews (the Arab geographer Abū Sa'īd al-Hassan, Ibn Wahab of Bassora, al-Idrisi, Ibn Battuta, Marco Polo, Oderic of Pordenone, John of Montecorvino, Muḥammad b. Abi Ṭalib al-Dimashqi, Pedro Alvarez) referred to skin color. The same was true of the letters from India traders translated by S. D. Goitein, including one (ca. 1204) from a trader who was often asked by Indian congregations to lead them in prayer.¹⁰⁸ The visit of the Yemenite poet Zacharia ben Sa'adia ben Jacob al Zahari (or al-Ḍahri) in the first half of the sixteenth century (J. B. Segal placed it at 1570)¹⁰⁹ produced no mention of color, although it was one of the earliest mentions of there being two distinct Jewish communities. The Yemenite poet concisely summed up what was to become (what already was?) a major bone of contention between them. Although these "other congregations" were not called Black, they were here said to be descendants of Kushite and Canaanite slaves:

A congregation of Sephardim from the Jewish stock
With other congregations
But they are proselytes
And converted in earlier times
From the Kushites¹¹⁰ and Canaanites
[They are] knowers of practice and law
And the laws of the Torah they acknowledge.¹¹¹

Color crept in more frequently with direct European contact and conquest in the fifteenth century, in an effort to situate these "exotic" Jews.¹¹² A Portuguese Converso named Hayim Franco, possibly a member of Vasco da Gama's second expedition to India, related his experiences of the Jews in Cranganore to Yohanan Alemanno while visiting Mantua in 1503/4. Franco stated that the Jews "are black and white, like the other Indians." Arthur Lesley, who discovered Franco's testimony in a manuscript note of Alemanno's, suggested that it "may mean as little as that the Jews were indistinguishable from other Indians in their appearance, or as much as that they, like other Indians, were divided among themselves according to color."¹¹³ The Portuguese explorer Duarte Barbosa mentioned Jews at Cochin as "natives of the country" in 1516.¹¹⁴ Already in the late 1550s, Portuguese inquisitors with the Inquisition in Goa, who were investigating the activities of various New Christians with the Jewish community of Cochin, as well as some of the New Christians themselves, were describing some of the Cochini Jews as "whites" and others as "blacks (*pretos*)" or "malabars."¹¹⁵ John Huygen Van Linschoten, a Dutch traveler visiting India in 1584, noted that the Jews outside of Cochin "are most white of color, like men of *Europa*, & haue many fair women."¹¹⁶ Another Dutch traveler, Baldaeus, wrote that "[i]n and around the city of Cochin live . . . also some Jews who even have a synagogue allowed them outside the fortifications; they are neither white nor brown, but quite black."¹¹⁷ The Portuguese friar António de Gouveia, writing at the beginning of the seventeenth century, described the Jews of Malabar as "of the color of those of the land, excepting some whites of upper Cochin, who come from other parts, or sons of those who arrived from [elsewhere], & they are very ancient in Malabar."¹¹⁸ Finally, Portuguese authorities in Goa employed terms of color to describe the differing Jewish communities. In 1636, the viceroy of Goa wrote to the king of Portugal seeking a course of action regarding "the synagogues of the white and black Jews that the king of Cochin permitted in his territory."¹¹⁹

With the arrival of European residents and colonists, Jews as well as Christians, the categorization of black/white evidently became more useful in understanding and depicting the Cochin Jewish community. Though not solely, this development stemmed from the increasing color consciousness of these Europeans. Perhaps the most prominent example of this increasing usefulness can be found in the travel report of Mosseh Pereyra de Paiva. About Pereyra de Paiva's biography much remains uncertain, although he seems to have come from one of the most prominent and wealthy families among the Amsterdam Sephardim.¹²⁰ Pereyra de Paiva was sent by the Amsterdam Jewish community on an ethnographic mission to investigate "our brother inhabitants"¹²¹ in the recently Dutch Asian subcontinent, leaving Amsterdam on 25 November 1685 (*Notisias*, 5). A Hebrew letter, circa 1787, from a member (members?) of the

Paradesi or White Jews of Cochin to the Portuguese Jewish community in New York contained the following depiction:

And in 1686 according to the Christians four people from Amsterdam came here to Cochin: Moses Pereyra, Isaac Orgas [Hergas?],¹²² Abraham Burta, Isaac Mocat.¹²³ And they were Jews, Sephardim, merchants, and they saw all the places where Jews live, and they were glad, and wrote to Amsterdam all the matters and also the lack of books. And because they heard they sent from the Holy Community of Amsterdam a gift to the Holy Community of Cochin: *humashim* [Pentateuchs], *maḥzorim* [High Holiday prayer books], and the *Shulḥan Arukh*, and some other books and the whole congregation rejoiced. And from that time we had friends in Amsterdam and we write to them and they bring books which we need until today.¹²⁴

The ethnological gaze of the "developed" Jewish community intertwined from the start with philanthropy. The ethnological import of this first "official" mission to this "exotic" Jewish community can be further gleaned from the 12 historical and 35 ritual questions put to the community by Pereyra de Paiva, which he appended to the end of his report, along with the rather laconic answers.¹²⁵ In his slim report, *Notisias dos judeos de Cochin*, printed at his own expense, Pereyra de Paiva provided a list of Cochin's Jewish householders, noting in front of some of them a "B" for "*branco*/white." Although today this report appears obscure, within twenty-five years of its publication no fewer than three Yiddish editions had come out, one but a few days after the original Portuguese version.¹²⁶ Pereyra de Paiva's report transmogrified easily into a form of Jewish colonial travel literature, its wider dissemination curtailed probably solely by the slim quality of the text.¹²⁷

Pereyra de Paiva's text constitutes a fascinating autoethnographic Jewish text. Of the genesis of Pereyra de Paiva's feelings, well in tune with his time, of "fraternal love . . . always, with living truth, to see for myself our brothers of Cochin," we know nothing (*Notisias*, 3). Nonetheless, using the format of the travel report genre, he cast his gaze at these other Jews, who wavered for him at the border of the same and the different. The rites and ceremonies stood mostly parallel with "ours," those of Western Sephardim, other than in a handful of cases, which Pereyra duly recorded, "more for reason of curiosity than importance" (8).¹²⁸ Pereyra de Paiva's captured glimpse of these Indian Jews came through a discourse more "scientific" than that which reported on the Lost Tribes for medieval readers. Although he indeed asked his informants "Whether they have any notice of the 9 tribes" (13) – nine because these Cochini Jews constitute the tenth? – these Cochinis presented a more complicated "modern" Jewish community than the mirage-inflected medieval Lost Tribespeople, with Cochin boasting "eastern" Jews and "western" Jews, colonial Jews and Jews of the metropole.¹²⁹ Pereyra de Paiva provided several indications of their exoticism.

"The women do not go out [of their houses], nor are seen in their homes," wrote Pereyra de Paiva (7). The hosts presented a concert for the visitors, whose "harmonies were pleasing enough, even if it [the concert] was too long" (4), a curiously restrained description given the florid language throughout the *Notisias*. Pereyra de Paiva evidently did not fully appreciate this "Indian" music.

For this discussion, the most significant element of Pereyra de Paiva's construction of identity consisted of his detailing which community members were White. Here, then, is Pereyra de Paiva's list of the heads of families:

LIST OF THE HEADS OF FAMILIES

[*B denotes Brancos (White)]

- B. H[aham]. R. Haim Belilia – his great grandfather from Safet. (ca. 1566)
- B. David Levy Medulhar – his grandfather from Germany. (ca. 1596)
- B. Haim Belilia, teacher, scribe – his great grandfather from Alepo. (1566)
- B. David Raby – from Alepo. (1646)
- B. H. Hia Pinto – from Damascus. (d. in Cochin 1689)
- Elia and David Castiel – his great, great, great grandfather from Castella (Spain). (ca. 1566)
- Jeuda and David Asquenazim – sons of the distinguished H. Mosseh Asquenaz – his grandfather from Germany. (d. in Cochin 1646)
- Semtob Castiel has retired to Paru by order of Batavia, owing to some unpleasantness he had with David Levy whose post he occupied before. (some branches of the family said to have come in 1511)
- Mosseh Aleva – his grandfather from Alepo. (1606)
- B. Joseph and Zacharias Zackay – descendants of the first families from Cranganore, their grandfather the distinguished H. Selomo Zackay.
- B. Semuel Barrioti – his father and grandfather from Constantina. (1578)
- David Belilia – his grandfather from Jerusalem. (1596)
- B. Elia a Reuyaly (Reby) – his great grandfather from Jerusalem and the first foreigner in Cochin. (ca. 1566)
- Ishac and Abraham Aleva – their grandfather from Alepo. (1596)
- B. Sason Michael from the city of Xiras in Persia.
- B. Joseph Susany (Guer [proselyte]) from Susan the capital [Persia].
- Aaron of Cranganore of the first families.
- B. Isaque Toby from Berberia.
- Mosseh and Meyr, from the seed of the [Cranganor?] royalty on the mother's side.
- B. Joseph Asury from Babel (6).¹³⁰

Several conclusions and questions can be tentatively drawn from this text. First, one should note that the community was "quite cosmopolitan".¹³¹ The

population included Jews from Germany, Spain, Damascus, Aleppo, Safed, Jerusalem, Turkey, Persia, Iraq, Berberia, and so on. Yet Pereyra de Paiva listed as White some Jews from Middle Eastern countries and North Africa, and left out some Jews from Germany and even Iberian lands! Jews derived from the families at Cranganore – and therefore earlier arrivals than those who seem to have fled the Iberian persecutions – were also called White. Second, it appears that non-White Jews also belonged to this Paradesi community (the name "Paradesi" means "foreigner," and refers to those who came from abroad to India, especially from the West).

It is unclear whose "voice" the listing of Whites represents. Perhaps the listing was Pereyra de Paiva's concoction. Perhaps he was told by members of the Paradesi synagogue who was White and who not.

Pereyra de Paiva's taxonomy does not correspond exactly to similar taxonomies said to have been used in the area by the Portuguese or by the Frenchman Pyrard de Laval, who was in South India around 1608. He described the social structuration, identical to that under construction in the Americas, as such:

To the Portuguese the most esteemed are those who have come from Portugal and are called "Portuguese of Portugal," next are those born in India of Portuguese father and mother and called *castici* . . . ; the least esteemed are the offspring of a Portuguese and an Indian parent and called *Metices*, that is *Metifs*, or mixed. Those born of a Portuguese father and a caffre or African negro mother are called *Mulestres* and are held in like consideration with the *Metifs*.

Not surprisingly, Pyrard related that the Portuguese

will not that any Portuguese or other [European] should do any vile or dishonourable work, nor should beg his livelihood; they will rather maintain him to the best of their power. Insomuch that the greatest of them treat the lowliest with honour, and they infinitely prize the title "Portuguese of Portugal," calling such a one *Homo blanco* or white man, all the poor Indians they despise, as though they would trample them under their feet.¹³²

Pereyra de Paiva's Whites should thus have corresponded with those born outside of India, to the "purely foreign-born" in the Portuguese scheme.¹³³ But if the dates provided tell us when the families arrived, then some of those listed as Whites must have been born in India. "White" could indicate "of foreign extraction," as some of those listed were Sephardim, and we know that the sixteenth-century Yemenite poet Zacharia ben Sa'adia ben Jacob al Zahari called the *meyuhasin* Jews "Sephardim," while in the seventeenth century the *meyuhasin* were known as "Majorcan" Jews.¹³⁴ Yet the list of Whites does not correspond to the "First Spanish Jews" (8) who arrived in Cochin in the year 5373 (1513/4).¹³⁵

J. B. Segal stated that the "White" heads of households designated those families that "had not acquired an Indian strain."¹³⁶ But this does not come across clearly. Pereyra de Paiva described these heads of the Paradesi households as follows:

All of these people are very well disposed, and by nature gentle, Great Jews, and *ba'alei Torah*, and Less Merchants could not puncture them, and by color they have become mulattos, which certainly proceeds from the climate, seeing that they are totally separated from the Malabars, . . . that there is Great disgrace in marrying them [Here Pereyra de Paiva inserts a note on the margin: They cite as a Reason that they are slaves of slaves, and that they are mixed with Canaanites, Converts, and Muslims], they do not eat from their butcher nor count them as one of the ten men needed for prayer, even though they observe in everything, all of them, the same rites and ceremonies as do the others. (6-7)

Phenotypically, even the Paradesi Jews were not White, as Pereyra de Paiva himself noted, although he was careful to ascribe their color to the accident of the "environment" and not to miscegenation with "really," that is, essentially, dark people. Pereyra de Paiva was able "with great difficulty" to see the two daughters of David Raby (i.e., David Rahabi). They were, he wrote, both "gentle, young, white and beautiful" (7). As explained earlier, the children would darken as they grew under the Indian sun. These were yet White, since the girls were young and the women in general never left their houses. Whiteness often played a trope that ironically had little to do with skin color; Pereyra de Paiva's list proves no exception. But Pereyra de Paiva described *all* of the heads of households as having avoided intermarriage with the "Indian" Black Jews; hence, again, we are left with the difficulty that some of these leaders were not listed as "White."

Pereyra de Paiva's taxonomy fails to correspond fully to the Indian caste system or at least to such a system as it is usually imagined.¹³⁷ For one thing, the complicated historical unfolding of the caste structure makes it uncertain that caste meant very much in early colonial southern India. At about the seventeenth century, sociopolitical organization based itself increasingly, but loosely and hardly in a uniform fashion, on ties of blood and privileged client-sponsor relations with elite lineages. The fractured multiplicity of urban merchants, priests, warrior groups, courtiers, and so on relied more and more on their asserted superiority over the rural peasantry and lower classes, but again, the notion of castes among Indian collectives, especially in the South, was probably still less systematic than that constructed by Portuguese colonists.¹³⁸ Even so, while many castes and subcastes differed from one another in custom and habit, Pereyra de Paiva and others attested to the identical Judaisms of the two Jewish communities; only in economic focus and power did the two communities

differ. Ultimately, one has a circularly defined subcaste of "elite" Jews, despite the fact that even Pereyra de Paiva described the Jews from "the other side" as equally wealthy. All evidence suggests that what distinguished the meyuhasin from the non-meyuhasin was that the former claimed "unquestioned Jewish status" and "attested lineage."¹³⁹ This is more than likely the (self-)articulation of their difference from the "other" Jews, though even with this explanation one sees that yet another, different, and not fully consistent distinction has been made, between Whites and non-Whites. Pereyra de Paiva himself presented the already well-attested history of the Black Jews in a paragraph entitled "Their Origin." They

[p]roceeded from the fact that The Jews of Cranganor possessed Great prosperity and numbers of Slaves, and among them a Ba'al Torah, a Prime citizen and powerful, who taught Judaism to 25 of his [slaves], giving them liberty and a synagogue. Time passed, the Masters of Cranganore, dying and becoming fewer, the slaves were annexed to them, increasing to the size presently seen. (8)

In the sense that the Paradesi community represented a self-willed political assemblage of a subject-citizenry with particular interests, basing its claims on genealogy (not mixed with former slaves or converts), place of family origin (abroad, Cranganore), and skin color (White), we arrive at a general parallel to Indian castes.¹⁴⁰ In Pereyra de Paiva's list, one sees this self-representation reflected through the eyes of the Portuguese *sistema de castas*, though no apparent systemization of Pereyra de Paiva's list of Whites fully resolves the list's gaps and contradictions.

Commercial ties and aspirations, often one of the defining factors in the differentiation of Indian urban groups, might have made the most salient factor behind attaining Whiteness a subjectively defined elective affinity for Europe. Behind Pereyra de Paiva's designation of *branco* in his 1686 list of householders was hardly the first such usage regarding the Cochin community, inasmuch as many descriptions by Europeans since the sixteenth century, especially those by Portuguese witnesses, employed the color schema of the *sistema de castas*. Bar-Giora incorrectly held Pereyra de Paiva's usage to be the one that set the trend for calling the Paradesi (foreign) Jews Whites.¹⁴¹ More important than its status as originary, however, is its significance in revealing the valence of the color distinctions being made. Segal cited a 1676 letter to Amsterdam of the color distinctions being made. Segal cited a 1676 letter to Amsterdam of the Paradesi Jew David Rahabi, whom Pereyra de Paiva visited in Cochin, who reported that the majority of Jews in Cochin were "black like Ethiopians except for some twenty-five families who are of white or whitish complexion, some of them eager to claim European descent."¹⁴² Linschoten's full comment on the Jews outside of Cochin reiterated the connection between Whiteness and Europe: "[T]hey are most white of color, like men of *Europa*, & have many fair women.

There are manie of them that came out of the country of *Palestina & Ierusalem* thether, and speake ouer all the Exchange verie perfect and good *Spanish*."¹⁴³ Rahabi's letter very well may have provided the impetus for the India voyage of Pereyra de Paiva and his colleagues. Yet another letter (or a Portuguese translation of it) from the same year, 1676, authored by the Cochini Jews Venbeniste Hain Belilho and Moseh Asquenasi, can be found in the incoming correspondence of the Amsterdam *parnasim*.¹⁴⁴ This second letter made no mention of the two Cochin communities or any conflict, but did allude lamentingly to the absence of direct contact with the Dutch Sephardim.

Earlier commercial partnerships between Cochini Jewish merchants and Portuguese Conversos in Cochin had not withstood the growing inquisitorial persecution within Portuguese society in India, nor did Jewish commerce in general succeed in staving off Portuguese competition.¹⁴⁵ The timing of Pereyra de Paiva's journey may thus have had something to do with the changing face of commerce in colonial India. After the Dutch conquest of 1663, Jewish merchants were again able to take advantage of commercial opportunities. Indeed, it was the Rahabi family, which arrived in Cochin only in the late 1640s, that soon dominated the local mercantile landscape.¹⁴⁶ In the early 1680s, the Dutch East India Company attempted to bolster the trade of pepper and other commodities at Cochin, which at the time stood as the sole recognized point of export for pepper, providing, as of 1683, passes to Malabar only to Cochini merchants. The same years saw the Dutch grudgingly accepting the end of the monopoly system when it came to pepper.¹⁴⁷ Meanwhile, the English East India Company was making efforts to enforce its own monopoly on the diamond trade from India. In the 1680s, Jewish Sephardic agents first received permission from the company to operate at Surat, although behind the scenes they were sabotaged by the company, which did everything it could to hamper their potential success.¹⁴⁸ Perhaps, ultimately, Pereyra de Paiva's "codification" of White Jews in Cochin reflected the need in Sephardic Amsterdam and London for trustworthy kin with whom to trade in India. His entire venture to India and his conveyance of White Jewish potential trading partners may even have been part of an attempt to strengthen his own position in the India trade. Already in 1676 he had become a partner along with Aron Pereira (presumably his brother) in a consortium of Amsterdam jewel buyers.¹⁴⁹ If Edgar Roy Samuel was correct in his assertion that Mosseh Pereyra de Paiva operated as a jewel trader in Surat under the name Pedro Pereira, then he did so just after his Cochin adventure, during the late 1680s and early 1690s.¹⁵⁰

The color-coded list of householders produced by Mosseh Pereyra da Paiva came amid a series of oscillating statements, Jewish and non-Jewish, articulating anew the difference between the two Cochin communities, between two kinds of Jews ("color" vs. "status"). Yet the distance between Rahabi's 1676 letter – the vague "white or whitish complexion," their unauthorized claim to

Whiteness – and the list of Mosseh Pereyra de Paiva – with its categorical fixity of the bureaucratic marker "B," its authorizing repetition of Paradesi claims of European status – points to the transformations of this communal conflict under the gravitational pull of European empire and Sephardic international commerce. For some Sephardic Jews in India, The Netherlands, and elsewhere, European Whiteness seemed imperative.

THE MOVE TO COLOR

The experimental gropings toward the Whiteness of some early modern Jews made up a part of the larger efforts at "racial" definitions resulting from and causing the mingling clash between Europeans and Africans and Americans and others. This always-under-construction set of notions about peoples and their differences existed long before the Enlightenment origins usually assigned to "racism" by scholarship. It existed in a set of European and colonial (including Jewish) legal practices, modes of behavior, and textual reasonings toward and about Black people nearly solidified by the end of the seventeenth century, when not only the Iberian powers but fully all of Western Europe assumed the essential enslavability and lower nature of Blacks. (This assumption-in-practice became fully articulated discursively only afterward in the "long" eighteenth century.)

The improvised and patchwork discourse on the differences between Blacks and Whites (and mixtures) buttressed the ideology being constructed out of the "experience" with and of Africans in Africa and Black slavery. Race in this sense, as a social tool, stemmed from several related causes that may not have signified "identity." Robin Blackburn reminded us that in the demographic setting of the Americas, "the distinctive colour of 'negros' or black Africans by making them more visible, rendered them easier to control."¹⁵¹ Unlike "brown"-skinned Iberian servants or paler northern servants, dark-skinned Blacks could not "disappear" into the colonial crowd upon escape. Stuart B. Schwartz has suggested that early color categories may have resulted from other practical considerations: "responsibility for taxes, tribute, or military service, access to resources, escape from labor requirements, desire for social mobility."¹⁵² The invention of a Black race by Portuguese and Spanish bureaucrats and officials also carried clear colonial significance in managing the effective melding of the diverse ethnic slave population into a governable mass. Cañizares Esquerra argued that race as a rhetorical tool became important in the Americas, in contrast to Europe, because it became needed in order to combat the apparent equalization that birth in the Americas gave to non-White people, who thus became creoles on the same level as European creoles.¹⁵³ Whiteness surely became important as a cause and result of the melding of a ruling elite from members of varying "European" peoples working side by side in the colonies: Spaniards, Germans, English, Dutch, Sephardim forging themselves

contemporary discourse. A useful approach would aver that discourse builds on a model that is "simultaneously either/or."¹⁶³

Ignored in approaches that bifurcate the internal and external origins of the Sephardic discourse and behavior being considered is the possibility that these Jews and (ex-)Conversos might have been excluded by Christians as Jews and excluders of Blacks as Whites. The aspects of *limpieza de sangre* or of the *sistema de castas* put into place by exiled Sephardim were not internalized or appropriated as if they came from without; they derived from aspects of the Iberian and then Dutch and English culture to which these (ex-)Conversos belonged as insiders from the perspective of classical culture, of monotheism, even, despite frequent ambivalence, of color; they derived from aspects of the Jewish culture that these (ex-)Conversos (re)appropriated at home again in exile.

Sephardic identity was often highly compartmentalized. Daniel Swetschinski described the variegated elements of the culture of the seventeenth-century Portuguese Jews living in Amsterdam as making up "a patchwork culture."¹⁶⁴ Yosef Kaplan and Daniel Swetschinski found evidence of the multiple nature of their identity in the continued use of Christian names among Dutch Sephardim, even among those born and raised in Amsterdam. When they signed business documents and swore before notaries, they used a Christian name from their upbringing.¹⁶⁵ Swetschinski has argued that the charitable organizations for which the Portuguese Jewish diaspora became so famous were modeled on the Catholic institutions of Portugal.¹⁶⁶ The panoply of Sephardic texts and actions aimed at Blacks and Blackness cited in this chapter was conducted mostly in Portuguese or Spanish, with Hebrew formulations emanating from the halakhic domain (and being the most removed of the three languages from the ken of Western Sephardic experience).

Regarding the matter of communal administration, and particularly social engineering, Sephardic models stemmed to an incredibly high degree from the Catholic world. The Sephardim did not adopt these models; they shared them. In the mid-seventeenth century, then, some elite Sephardim assembled a Jewish unit of the increasingly global caste system. The next chapter follows this institutionalization as it gained more extent and concreteness in the eighteenth-century Sephardic Caribbean.

The Religious Life of Slaves Belonging to Jews

Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Dutch and English Colonies

In this chapter I address several aspects of Jewish slave owning in the Dutch and English colonies in the Americas, mostly in the Caribbean, with the particular goal of understanding the role played by religious identity in the interactions between Jews and Blacks. Looking at everyday life and the organization of Jewish society vis-à-vis slaves and Blacks, I have tried to gain more precision in understanding the nature of the Jewishness of those Sephardim who owned slaves, the degree of Jewishness conveyed to the slaves of Jews, and the significance of these identities for both slaves and masters. Instead of assuming a monolithic, higher Jewish consciousness when it came to slavery and oppression, we must understand to what degree, if at all, Judaism and the environment of industrial slavery combined to affect Jewish ritual practice and attitudes regarding their slaves. Hence, I look in depth at some specific practices, that is, sites of master-slave interaction: the manumission, circumcision, naming, and burial of slaves. To what degree did relations west of the Atlantic continue or differ from relations east of the Atlantic? Throughout, I attend to the nuances of the complex, intimate living situation of slave and master in their shared but vastly different worlds, proceeding as much as possible phenomenologically.

Humphrey E. Lamur's complaint that "very little is known about the religion of slaves in the Western hemisphere" holds at least as true for slaves of Jews.¹ While for the Mediterranean region and Europe we possess over a hundred responsa directly relating to slaves, barely any similar documents (possibly) stemming from the Americas exist for the whole seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This removes an entire realm of information about and insight into the halakhic issues with which slave owners or community members and, to a lesser extent, slaves grappled. Aside from two or three responsa from the Americas, one study found that the "interval of 'no questions asked' appears to have been in force until the beginning of the Russian-Jewish settlement" in the 1850s.² Thus, next to nothing is known about the religious life of slaves

belonging to Jews in Dutch Brazil, Barbados, Jamaica, or other even smaller settlements, for instance. No communal ordinance regarding slaves survives from Barbados, Jamaica, or the other smaller Jewish communities, while only Curaçao and Surinam, both with larger numbers of Jews holding slaves and engaging in plantation agriculture, produced some such legislation, traces of which remain extant. The assumption, if not explicit opinion, of many scholars was that Jewish slave owners in the colonies "judaized" their slaves. Wilfred S. Samuel wrote, without providing evidence, that "the Judeo-Dutch congregations in Guiana and Curaçao... 'initiated' their Negroes."³ From the few sources available, however, it appears that, like their non-Jewish peers throughout the Dutch and English colonies, Jews for the most part kept their religion from the great majority of their slaves.⁴

The forced intimacy of slavery inevitably gave rise to complex interpersonal relations between members of different social groups, relations characterized by hostility, adoption, compromise, and affection outside the usually sanctioned social norms. These possibilities became even more significant on rural plantations, of which Surinam's Jodensavanne constituted the largest example as both a collective of such plantations and as a plantation community itself. On rural plantations, though not there alone, close relations often developed between planters and house slaves, the latter usually lighter skinned, female, and therefore favored. The statistically minor mulatto or colored children thus often grew up as privileged slaves, frequently received their liberty, and maintained close ties with their fathers/masters. According to Rosemary Brana-Shute, in 1805, colored slaves, in contrast to Black slaves, constituted 2.6 percent of the total Surinamese slave population of 42,736, but about 60 percent of all slaves manumitted between 1760 and 1836.⁵ Some very few of these mixed-blood slaves even took on the religion of their owners, and the same process is seen among slaves of Jews. One exceptional colored Jewish slave, nephew or cousin of his Sephardic mistress, "who had raised him to manhood," functioned as director of the plantation. His manumission documents, submitted in 1769, assumed that "he would continue to live and work with his ex-owner," and specified that "he would one day inherit her estate, including the plantation."⁶

Scholarship has often reinscribed such disproportionate affection, mainly on the basis of the greater documentation it engendered. Jewish scholars are fond of pointing to the colored Jews of Surinam as evidence of the attraction of slaves to Judaism and its encouragement by Jewish masters, as well as the implied beneficence of Jews as slave owners. The colored Jews serve to corroborate the feelings of the researchers as to the kindly nature of Jewish slave owners. Reiterating the favored position of these lighter-skinned slaves, more eager to assimilate to the master culture, Jewish scholarship has paid far more attention to them as well. The situation of the small group of Black and colored Jews in

Surinam has been described already by Robert Cohen.⁷ Yet even these usually lighter-skinned Africans and their descendants, some with Jewish names, when freed, often failed to remain affiliated with the community. Many assimilated into Christian families of free Blacks and coloreds. It is unclear whether this stemmed from requirements that manumitted slaves needed to be educated in the Reformed religion, since obviously some ex-slaves did remain Jewish. Although their fascinating story deserves fuller treatment than I can give here, I try to include as well the far higher number of slaves who remained neutral to and outside the religious life of their owners.

CIRCUMCISION AND CONVERSION

First I will tackle the most basic issue, whether Jews indeed converted their slaves to Judaism, and, if so, how. As I showed in Chapters 7 and 8, in Sephardic Amsterdam circumcision of slaves by now constituted a voluntary procedure undergone on manumission. I have not been able to find any local *ascama* relating to the circumcision or immersion of slaves from the Caribbean.

In those parts of Brazil conquered by the Dutch, Jews were pretty much free to treat their slaves according to their religious dictates, if they so desired. Yet the dearth of available documentation allows us to reconstruct the religious life of Jews and their slaves only inferentially. As cited earlier, one scholar stated that "a few of the Jews were mulatto half-castes."⁸ A closer look is warranted.

In 1640, the Synod of the Reformed Church gathered in Recife and issued a proclamation that described how the Jews in Dutch Brazil "marry with Christians, seduce Christians toward sacrilegious Judaism, circumcise Christians, are served by Christians as servants in their houses and by Christian women as their concubines."⁹ The charges of the synod that Jews converted and circumcized Christians were rejected by the Dutch High Counselors in Brazil, who reviewed the data and presented the charges to the Jewish representatives in Recife for their response. De Mello cited the results, from a general missive to the Council of Nineteen dated 13 February 1645:

[T]he situation of Brazil in various matters, including in religious questions, is presented in the fatherland as possessing a form lamentable and atrocious and not of the manner in which things in fact occur, everyone seeing the defamation of the government, . . . many fewer [people] who have concubines and Christian prostitutes with them[;] also neither do we hear ever that some Dutchman or person of another nation is to be circumcised by them.¹⁰

Though mainly interested in White servants, from the general language used it would seem that this survey could have included Blacks, who likewise did not circumcise or convert, if the information is to be believed. A notation made

in the 31 July 1643 minutes of the Classis of Amsterdam recorded that the Classis of Brazil specifically addressed the issue as far as "Christian servants" were concerned, a topic commonplace in contemporary continental European legislation.¹¹ The question remains whether the order covered African slaves, regardless of their religion. On 12 November 1642, a "rule" was established by the Brazilian council stating that the Jews' "men servants and maid servants may not be Christians."¹² The language may even imply that un-Christianized Blacks were sanctioned as the labor pool for Jewish service needs.

Four years after the missive sent to Amsterdam, in 1649, the Jewish community of Recife itself made conversionary actions even more unlikely, ordering that

[no] person shall – except with the permission of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad – circumcise a stranger or admit a strange woman to the Theuilah, under penalty of being separated from the nation and fined fifty florins. And if that person be a slave, he shall not be circumcised without first having been freed by his master, so that the master shall not be able to sell him from the moment the slave will have bound himself [to Judaism].¹³

The Jewish community likely issued this ruling in response to the charges of the synod, which had generated the notice of the High Counselors, which in turn very likely created pressure within the Jewish leadership to act. This would explain why the Jewish leadership in Recife, made up as it was of so many figures from Amsterdam, did not institute such regulations from the beginning of the issuance of *ascamot* about the running of the community (i.e., 1648), especially given the degree to which they based their communal ordinances on those of Amsterdam. If this ordinance came as a reaction to official discontent, its phrasing may indicate that the Jewish leadership considered slaves Christians whose conversion to Judaism before their liberation would offend the Dutch authorities. One might infer that before this proclamation, some Brazilian Jews *did* immerse female slaves and circumcise male ones in accord with *halakha*. I have not come across any mention of a *mohel* in the colony (though the original *mikve* was recently reported discovered in the Recife synagogue), but of course it is possible that individual Jews, though mostly barely educated Jewishly, pursued the circumcision of their slaves.¹⁴

To the degree that Blacks and mulattos had become Christian, one assumes that the Calvinist clergymen worried about their "seduction . . . toward sacrilegious Judaism" as well. The question is not whether Jews owned or employed Blacks as slaves, since such is abundantly clear from both Jewish and non-Jewish sources. The question is whether the conversion of Blacks to Judaism mattered to the complaining Calvinist clergymen. (One sees here a glimpse of the differences between metropole and colony over the question of the religious

education of slaves.) West India Company employee John Nieuhoff reproduced the text of the same letter (?), also dated 13 February 1645, sent from the colonial Dutch authorities to the "West-India" Company, concerning the plans of the Portuguese to take Recife, "which they intended to surprise, upon a certain Day appointed for the Sale of Negro's, when the Inhabitants of the Country flocking thither in great numbers, they did not doubt, but with the assistance of our own Negro's (who are for the most part Papists) to make themselves masters of the place."¹⁵ In other words, the slaves of the Dutch, other than those freshly arrived from Africa, had been Christianized by the Catholic Portuguese, former rulers of the region.¹⁶ The Jewish leadership told the High Counselors only that "not one of [the Jews] has employed Christians, and not two are householders, each of these with 9 or 10 children, and that they live in much harmony, these already were serving them in Holland."¹⁷ Either the Jewish leadership defended itself by stretching the truth or they left slaves out. Either Brazilian Jews owned no slaves (hardly likely) or they remained unbaptized and unconverted to Christianity, that is, were *boçales*, newly imported slaves, and/or had been immersed/circumcised for ritually proper service among Jews. The nonexistent or superficial Christianity of the slaves of Conversos was raised in one seventeenth-century denunciation given to the Portuguese Inquisition in Brazil. The charge, which cannot be overly weighted because of its polemical context, asserted that the "judaizers" of Bahia could practice their illicit rites without fear of discovery because they "live in their ranches, separated from communication, served by brute negros who don't have anything Christian but the water of baptism."¹⁸ Perhaps because the original complaint of the Dutch authorities could be read as ignoring slaves, the Sephardic leadership chose to ignore the issue of slaves in its response to it, while at the same time exercising greater caution in internal administration by ensuring that even slaves would not be "judaized."

In 1654, when the Portuguese finally reconquered the parts of Brazil taken by the Dutch, the Jews fled. The French cleric Jean Baptiste du Tertre, who had lived in Martinique since 1640, described the arrival of several shiploads of refugee Dutch and Jewish colonists at Guadeloupe and Martinique, along with a number of slaves. It is clear from Du Tertre that Jews made up a small minority of the newcomers, but unclear to whom the various slaves belonged.¹⁹ These Blacks may well have been possessed by individual refugees on board, but could also have been slaves who received their liberty for helping fight the Portuguese, a common reward bestowed on slaves during military conflicts.²⁰ Noticeably, the slaves are *not* described as Jewish, something the generally anti-Jewish Du Tertre would have been quick to mention.

The one testimony that Jews might have brought some of their slaves into the orbit of their religion stems from a French chronicler of the Dutch-Portuguese

conflicts, Pierre Moreau. Moreau's statement presented a rather problematic attitude, however. He wrote:

The Jews are much better at instructing their own [people] in their beliefs, though everyone leads a lascivious and scandalous life – Jews, Christians, Portuguese, Dutch, English, Germans, Blacks, Brazilians, Tapoyos, Mulattos, Mamelukes and Creoles – living promiscuously, not to speak of incest and sins against nature. . . . But here is a prodigious effect of greed that does not at first seem likely: both the Jews and the Christians are involved in trading not only the children of female slaves, whom they permit their Blacks to abuse in their houses, but also in trading those issuing from their own blood and [that of] female Blacks whom they use for immoral purposes and hold as concubines, selling and buying them, as one does here [in Europe] with calves and sheep. It is remarkable that the magistrates' only response is to grant liberty to the slave sexually exploited by her master.²¹

Given the contradictory behavior Moreau described, it is difficult to lend full credence to his praise of Jewish concern for religious pedagogy. At any rate, it remains unclear whether slaves even comprised recipients of this concern. We are left, then, without definitive positive evidence that Jews converted their slaves to Judaism in Dutch Brazil.

It seems highly unlikely that the Sephardim of Curaçao circumcised their slaves. Both Protestants and Jews on the island "mostly had their slaves christened as Catholics."²² Like the Protestant population, the Jewish community, according to the Emmanuels, "would not recognize colored persons as members."²³ According to Jacob Rader Marcus as well, the Jews of Curaçao did not circumcise their male slaves, though he thought that Surinamese Jews did. Writing about the Jews of Curaçao, he noted in passing that "[u]nlike their Surinamese coreligionists, . . . [they] did not initiate their slaves into the covenant of Abraham."²⁴ As will be discussed later, no colored people were buried in the Curacoan Jewish cemetery and, to my knowledge, no other evidence indicating the conversion of slaves to Judaism has surfaced.

Marcus's opinion notwithstanding, it seems unlikely that the Jews of Surinam regularly circumcised their slaves in the eighteenth century. I have so far been unable to locate any circumcision registers from Surinam that might help resolve the question of whether slaves were circumcised. But from extant primary sources the generalization of circumcision and conversion seems doubtful.²⁵ A 1794 letter written by some of the Sephardic leaders to the colony's governor attempted to explain their position regarding recent controversies involving the group of Jewish mulattos (congregation *Darhe Jesarim*) who desired rights equal to those of the White Jews. Describing the genesis of this mulatto group, they wrote: "Several among the Portuguese Jewish Nation, out of private affection, begot children with some of their female slaves or mulattos. Out of particular

love for the Jewish Religion the boys were properly circumcised and the girls instructed by a teacher, as were their descendents."²⁶ I infer from the language used that only these children of "private affection" were circumcised or given some form of Jewish education, not every slave (though the language, at least of the translation, leaves unclear whose private affection acted here). If these Sephardic settlers followed the communal ordinance from *Zur Israel* in Recife, the circumcisions would have been performed only after manumission.

Certainly the majority of the slaves belonging to Surinamese Jews were not circumcised or converted to Judaism. The mulatto children brought about through relations with their slave women constituted the only Jewish slaves or former slaves in the colony, and not even all such mulatto offspring became Jewish. An anecdote told in the *Historical Essay* presents the case of a "decent Jew, well-read and of good judgment, [who] had a Negress as his concubine, who gave him several children who were reared in the [Dutch] Reformed religion."²⁷ One can infer from all this that the community considered only those mulatto slaves born to Jewish fathers to be *yelidei bayit* (= houseborn slaves) according to Genesis 17:13 and halakhic principle, in contrast to every child born of one's slaves, and that in Surinam only those slaves with Jewish fathers received circumcision or Jewish education, although I have not come across any explicit statement that such was the community's policy. I have also not found any halakhic precedent for this understanding. Only the ascamot from Amsterdam discussed in Chapter 8 yield such an approach. Such a practice would, if calculated generously, provide a total of perhaps 200 converted slaves (27 free mulattos and Blacks, whose religious affiliations are not clear, as of 1762, and "almost 100 free Jewish mulattoes" in 1788),²⁸ compared with the well over 10,000 slaves who belonged to Surinamese Jews during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, that is, at most 2 percent.

The religious dynamics of the slaves of Jewish masters in Surinam would seem to have run no differently than with those of Christians. Rosemary Brana-Shute calculated that only 8 percent of the 1,346 slaves nominated for manumission from 1760 to 1828 "indicated any experience of, education in, or commitment to Christianity."²⁹ The *Historical Essay* (1788) made distinctions between Jewish and non-Jewish slaves. Speaking of the losses incurred on a 1749 expedition against the Maroons, the text mentioned "Abm. de Britton, a mulatto Jew, and three of four . . . good slaves."³⁰ The latter, that is, had not been converted, as must have been true of the overwhelming majority of the slaves of these Jews.

Lists of names from Jewish plantations (treated in the fifth section of this chapter) further corroborate suspicions about the non-Jewish status of the majority of slaves belonging to Jews in Surinam. An extremely small percentage of the slaves listed in inventories of Jewish plantations bore names reflecting any kind of Jewish significance. Giving a slave a Jewish name constituted an act

far less troublesome than performing a ritual immersion and/or circumcision under proper conditions. If so few slaves received Jewish names, it stands to reason that even fewer received admission to Jewish communal practices.

If so few male slaves were converted in Surinam, it could not have been due to ignorance. Surinam was not a completely isolated hinterland when it came to religious culture. For example, a 1739 list of the Hebrew books held in the Ets Haim school at Jodensavanne makes it clear that enough halakhic sources existed in Surinam from which to draw a proper picture of duties regarding slaves.³¹ People with rabbinic knowledge and training lived in the colony as early as 1642 and throughout the eighteenth century.³² The decision not to circumcise or convert "ordinary" slaves in Surinam stemmed, therefore, from a policy decision similar to that we have seen in mid-seventeenth-century Amsterdam.

Evidence from the English colonies also presents an ambiguous picture, but nothing indicates the general circumcision of male slaves. In the North American colonies, circumcision apparently constituted a difficult and challenging rite even for the regular occasions of the birth of a son. According to Bradd Boxman, who analyzed the history of circumcision in the North American colonies:

In the colonial period . . . through the nineteenth century, the practice of brit milah [circumcision] amongst the Jews was hampered continually by the lack of qualified mohelim. We can only imagine how many Jewish families regretfully dispensed with the practice of this mitzvah on account of the difficulty in obtaining a mohel, or the prospect of the hardship brought on by the exorbitant cost in procuring the services of such an individual.³³

Holly Snyder disputed Boxman's conclusions, arguing that many fathers circumcised their own sons. She pointed to the example of an eighteenth-century family whose infant died as a result of their 100-mile trip to visit the nearest mohel in Savannah, Georgia.³⁴ Nevertheless, the circumcision of servants or slaves in such circumstances, ipso facto, seems highly unlikely. The list of circumcisions performed between 1775 and 1797 by Moses Seixas of Newport, Rhode Island, recorded none for servants or slaves, though we know that some of the town's Jews, including Seixas himself, possessed slaves.³⁵ The instructions on how to perform circumcisions sent in 1772 by Abraham I. Abrahams of New York to Seixas, who wanted to learn the procedure due to the Rhode Island community's dissatisfaction with the current mohel, nowhere mentioned that this ceremony might be performed for an adult male convert, slave or otherwise.³⁶ The circumcision book of Barnard Jacobs, who served as mohel throughout Pennsylvania between 1757 and 1790, presented in the introductory material the blessing to be said for circumcising converts (though it doesn't seem any such were performed), but made no mention of the extremely similar one to

be said for slaves.³⁷ The conversion of slaves in these colonies does not seem to have been common. An 1872 letter to Rabbi J. J. Lyons, rabbi of the Sephardic congregation *Sha'arei Tsedek* in New York, from N. H. Gould quoted from an article in the *Worcester Magazine & Historical Journal* (June 1826) relating that during the raging of the American Revolution, the Jews of Newport fled the British troops to Leicester, Massachusetts. They numbered, "including servants about seventy . . . tho many of the servants were not of the Jewish faith."³⁸

Several Sephardic men performed circumcisions in late-seventeenth-century Barbados – including Moses Jamis Gayo and Moses de Azavedo – so circumcising slaves easily would have been feasible there.³⁹ An order of the circumcision ceremony was printed in Barbados in 1794.⁴⁰ Nowhere did the slender volume mention slaves. It contained nothing other than the much more elaborate and generous rite for the circumcision of a son. The silence regarding the circumcision of slaves in this text indicates just how subterranean Sephardic discourse had made the issue. The lack of circumcisions and conversions of servants and slaves by Jews in English colonies reflected as well what Wilfred S. Samuel called the "strong feeling on the Island [of Barbados] against the conversion of the negroes." Accepting this dominant idea, wrote Samuel, the "black folk [of the Jews] consequently remained heathen."⁴¹ Though stemming from after the period under discussion, the apparently well-known liberation of slaves by Jamaican Jew Daniel Hart in 1838 stands as another case in point. Having gone out of his way to provide for his former slaves and to terminate the prejudice under which they lived and worked, he "advised them to turn for guidance and advice to their Christian pastor, Rev. James Atkins." Clearly, these were not Jewish slaves.⁴²

The attitude toward the circumcision of slaves among Caribbean Sephardim can probably be accurately gauged from R. Selomoh Levy Maduro's *Brit Yitshak* (Amsterdam, 1768), a compendium of texts to be read the night before a circumcision and a guide to the order of the ceremony. It contained the blessings for circumcising a slave, but prefaced it with the heading: "The order for circumcising and immersing a slave at the time the Temple was in existence." The ceremony's first instructions reiterated this declaration: "A Jew in buying a slave used to be obligated to bless" and so on.⁴³ Levy Maduro made this commandment obsolete,⁴⁴ despite the fact that many Sephardic rabbis held that the laws of slavery continued to be operative (see Chapter 2), and that responsa from Amsterdam make it clear that some Jews even in "the West" continued to own slaves according to the halakhic, and not just social, nomenclature and category.⁴⁵ Levy Maduro evidently held like those Sephardic rabbis who argued that the laws relating to Canaanite slaves no longer obtained. The author could not have been unaware of the social fact of Jewish slave owning; the book's final pages consisted of a list of *mohelim* in the colonies of Curaçao and

Surinam, among other Sephardic habitations. A connection probably exists between Levy Maduro's stance on the circumcision of slaves and his belonging to a family boasting prominent members in Curaçao, where male slaves were not circumcised.⁴⁶ Indeed, a Selomoh L. Maduro, no doubt our author, appears in records as the owner of an unnamed plantation in 1722.⁴⁷

Slaves and servants in English territories, then, remained unconverted, but, more importantly, due to their high numbers they constituted a significant class of people, and one no longer admissible into the community.⁴⁸ In 1793, the London *beit din* reported receiving a letter from the Jewish congregation in Philadelphia, Mikveh Israel, asking "how to proceed in the matter of a *Yahid* [member] who wishes to have converted, so that he may marry her, a servant with whom he has lived and by whom he has begotten children. The [London] Mahamad discreetly advised the Beth Din that it is impolitic to give instructions in such a case."⁴⁹ Note the distance between this response – so sensitive as to require behind-the-scenes treatment – and the perfectly explicit and halakhic reactions of earlier and later Mediterranean rabbis to marriages between former servants and free Jews. Other cases of conversion to Judaism had occurred by 1793 in England and its colonies. It is doubtful that the mahamad's discretion was due to political fears about converts in general.

RELIGIOUS LIFE

The limited assimilation of slaves into Judaism did not entail their complete exclusion from its activities. From Curaçao and Surinam we have evidence of the participation of some slaves and freed slaves in community religious rituals and life-cycle events. In all places, slaves of Jews certainly lived around the Judaism of their masters and mistresses. Slaves of Jews participated in some limited ways in the religious life of their owners, usually only in purely peripheral functions. Blacks and mulattos probably attended the funerals of community leaders, as they did on Curaçao in 1750.⁵⁰ Slaves, who rowed the barges laden with the many Jews and non-Jews attending important funerals, obviously heard the Hebrew elegies chanted by the cantor and others en route to the cemetery.⁵¹ When prayers were said on Curaçao for rain, because of the not-infrequent droughts, slaves appear to have been present.⁵² A slave to be purchased by the community in Surinam in 1772 had as one of his tasks the maintenance of quiet during prayer time at the Paramaribo synagogue.⁵³ Such an assignment even offered the slave a kind of power over the White congregants in a circumscribed but critical sphere of community life.

Only in rare instances did slaves participate actively in the ritual life of their Jewish owners, and this participation was increasingly limited over time in Curaçao and Surinam, where documentation can be adduced. Women slaves of

early Curacaoan Jews evidently slaughtered fowl for their masters, even without supervision, since a 1696 proclamation by the *parnasim* warned "that such cannot be eaten unless a Jew accompanies the slave to the examiner's house and delivers the fowl to the house of her masters."⁵⁴ That the proclamation specified women slaves reflects the gender breakdown of slave work among Jewish households and plantations. The prevalence of the habit of letting slaves take care of slaughtering might be read in the appearance of the unusual next sentence: "All members are urged not to be negligent in observing this important rule so easy to follow." In December 1774, faced with excessive costs that were depleting the Sedaca fund, the Jodensavanne *parnasim* found a way to ensure the continued and halakhically necessary vigil over the corpse of a person who had died but had not yet been buried: A woman slave was rented for the purpose.⁵⁵ Isaac S. Emmanuel printed a photograph of a Curacaoan Sephardi's gravestone depicting the deceased surrounded by his weeping family, a slave standing in the doorway to the room. According to Emmanuel, the slave "is about to perform a service," probably meaning that he would either pour the water out of all vessels in the house, according to the folk custom, or wash the body in preparation for burial.⁵⁶ These practices, in which slaves obviously did at times participate, all comprise private functions. We will find that when it came to more public activities, even this minimal degree of involvement saw strict curtailment by the *parnasim*.⁵⁷

Travelers to Curaçao in the early nineteenth century noted that Jews did not permit their slaves to work on Saturdays, the Jewish Sabbath, while the Christian authorities did not permit them to work on Sundays. Including slaves in the observance of the Jewish Sabbath, as biblically commanded, constituted a long-standing practice. When in 1701 Governor Nicolaas van Beck ordered the Jews to send their slaves to repair the city walls on Saturday, "he was vigorously opposed."⁵⁸ Jews could pay for special permission to let slaves work on Sundays, which some of the Sephardic planters did.⁵⁹ According to Johannes Hartog, slaves who "were willing" to work on Saturdays "received the wages of a free labourer, so that their doing labour might be interpreted as emanating from their own free will" and thus not constitute a transgression.⁶⁰

Among the Surinamese Sephardic planters, it seems that slaves also rested on Sabbaths and festivals, in accordance with biblical precept.⁶¹ Already in 1669, in response to a petition requesting expansion of earlier privileges, the colonial Dutch authorities were permitting the Jews to have "their Blacks" work on Sundays.⁶² This privilege strongly implies that slaves rested on Saturdays, since otherwise they would have had no days off. In October 1774, the *parnasim* at Jodensavanne gathered to deal with the case of Joseph Homem Pinto, who had apparently ordered his slaves and workers to work on the Sabbath.⁶³ That this was considered a transgression indicates the official attitude, at least for those

charm. *Mezuzot* could thus be found affixed in the correct place on the homes of non-Whites, but empty of the parchment with biblical passages required by Jewish law. Often "some text, in Dutch, from the Old or New Testament, is placed inside. Even non-holy texts are used. Such a text must always have some impressive wording, or a well known proverb."⁷⁵ These syncretistic uses of the mezuzah and other ritual objects or rites taken from Jews show, however, that we have left the realm of a believing practice of Judaism for even more nebulous regions of affinity, empathy, and mimicry.

A lengthy description in the *Historical Essay*, if its accuracy can be trusted, provides an additional, less abstract view of Jewish knowledge among slaves. The narrative relates a 1761 visit by Jewish planters chasing runaways to Juka, the village of the Maroons of that name. Their chief, Fosso, was formerly a slave to the Nassy family. Throughout the stay of the Jews, Fosso showed great solicitude for Jewish ritual and calendar, having had a hut emptied for the Jews to pray in, quieting the watching villagers during prayers, and ordering the villagers to bring fowls for killing on Friday for the Sabbath, for the Jewish visitors. The last provision Fosso announced "[o]ne Thursday afternoon." He knew enough, that is, about the weekly cycle culminating in Sabbath to instruct his people in and about the proper time. Yet no mention of kosher slaughtering methods appears amid the description of "the large quantity of fowl which everybody ordered killed in order to have the pleasure of saying that the whites profited from their presents."⁷⁶ Fosso did not know the Jewish prayers himself, although he knew what kind of decorum the Jews preferred, but possibly did not know about kosher slaughtering. Fosso, a Maroon who had probably run away from a life as a field slave, might represent the typical field slave's knowledge of the Judaism of his or her owners.

An occasional glimpse can be had of influence coursing in the other direction, from African slave to Jewish master. Freed and slave Afro-Curacoans asked not only well-off members of their own group but also Sephardic friends or former masters to sponsor the baptism of their children. Although this often had the purpose of generating a relationship through which the children and their families could receive aid, acceptance by Jews of the "giver" role could indicate sincere affection as well as a mere understanding of the invoked social convention.⁷⁷ According to one scholar, Curacoan Sephardim placed the corpses of the deceased "on a bier for a day after death, a flagrant breach of European Jewish tradition, derived from Kongo funeral practices."⁷⁸

HERITABILITY, MANUMISSION

One practice whose contours enable us to say something about the religious aspects of Jewish masters and their slaves is that of manumission. Given the labor

"need" created by the possibility of slavery, manumission should not be overplayed. Even in periods of crisis, that is, when the government or masters most required the services of their slaves, manumission proved to be the exception, not the rule, in the lives of most slaves. Magnus Mörner thought that frequency of manumission related to worsening economic conditions and their impact on slave prices, that is, that it stemmed more from fiduciary considerations of the mistress than from her humaneness.⁷⁹ In any case, manumission came all too rarely. Rosemary Brana-Shute, who studied the manumission of slaves in Surinam, found "the chances of ever having a request [for manumission] submitted [to the authorities] in one's behalf very, very poor." She tabulated that only 1,346 slaves merited nomination for manumission between 1760 and 1826, at no time over 0.8 percent of the slave population, though of those nominated, over 97 percent received their freedom.⁸⁰ It was the masters, then, who resisted the liberation of their slaves. Of the manumissions performed in Surinam from 1760 to 1826, free Blacks and colored owners sponsored over 23 percent, far more than the Jewish percentage, for instance.⁸¹ Due to the harsher nature of Surinam's slave economy, masters there, Jewish and non-Jewish, manumitted their slaves with far less frequency.

Still, most Jewish owners in other colonies did not manumit their slaves. Yet scholars engaging in apologetics continue to assert that "it was customary for Jews to emancipate several blacks in their wills."⁸² Perhaps true, but it was far more customary *not* to manumit slaves. Rates of manumission by Jews do not differ significantly from those of non-Jews; in some cases they may have been slightly higher, but this does not undo the fact that manumission constituted a privilege invoked for a small minority of slaves. In a random study of 36 eighteenth-century wills of Jews from Barbados, Joanna Westphal found that in "18 bequests, a total of 110 slaves are mentioned," while of these, "108 are given to heirs and beneficiaries, and 2 are manumitted, (set free for a payment to the local parish)" — just under 2 percent.⁸³ Counting the 57 Barbadian Sephardic wills from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries presented by Wilfred Samuel and Bertram Wallace Korn, I found mention of 125 slaves, 4 manumissions without conditions and 2 with conditions, a rate of 4.8 percent or 3.2 percent, depending on whether one includes the manumissions with restrictive conditions.⁸⁴ This rate was certainly higher than that for Surinam discussed by Brana-Shute, but more akin to rates in urban areas, where slavery discussed by Brana-Shute, but more akin to rates in urban areas, where slavery had a more solely domestic face. This accords with the opinion of Frederick Bowser, who thought that manumission "was largely an urban phenomenon," a reward for favored slaves who had managed to get close enough to the master to earn recognition as a person.⁸⁵ Wim Klooster found, on the basis of the number of free blacks and mulattos, that manumission rates in "distinctly urban" Curaçao had reached 5.6 percent of the slave population by 1717.⁸⁶

A recently published tabulation and index of the letters of manumission filed in Curaçao provides a treasure trove of information on patterns among Jewish owners.⁸⁷ The data, even abstracted from the original language of the documents, offers a valuable corroboration of patterns within other Caribbean Sephardic communities. Taking manumissions and declarations of intent to manumit enacted from 1722 (the first year of extant records) through 1800, of the 3,375 slaves manumitted, 792 were at the hands of a Jewish owner, or 23.5 percent.⁸⁸ In 140 additional instances, Jewish masters allowed other slaves or free colored persons to sponsor the manumission of one of their slaves. It is true, then, as Isaac Emmanuel suggested, that Sephardic owners (one Ashkenazic Jew is mentioned in the data set) on Curaçao manumitted their slaves with relative liberality, given that a 1765 census indicated that Jews owned only 15.5 percent of the island's slaves. Yet their generosity in manumitting slaves went alongside an almost total exclusion of their colored slaves and their slaves' children from participation in the religious life of the community.

Jews do not seem to have manumitted their slaves, other than in their wills, according to halakha. The wills met halakhic criteria as the intention of the master expressed therein was considered legally binding on any heirs.⁸⁹ In ideal cases, wills bore the signatures of two witnesses, making them valid for confirmation by a *beit din*. I have not found any indication of the existence of a *beit din* or the equivalent anywhere in the Caribbean, staffed by rabbis or the equivalent, which performed the functions ordained by halakha in the liberation of slaves.⁹⁰ I have not come across any mention that owners granted slaves a *get* (halakhic deed of emancipation) or that manumitted slaves were brought to the mikve for ritual immersion. Presumably, unconverted slaves possessed outside the framework of halakha needed no such rituals.⁹¹ In 1780, the *parnasim* in Surinam decided that any colored person seeking to become even a *congregant*, the lower level of membership in the community, required proof of manumission and declaration of paternity.⁹²

In Surinam, until 1733, manumission constituted a private transaction between owner and slave. In that year, the colonial authorities – the Court of Policy and Criminal Justice – began to intervene, regulating and administering manumissions.⁹³ According to Brana-Shute, this legislation insisted that masters “have [the freed slave] educated and brought up in the Christian religion.”⁹⁴ It also effectively removed the power to give liberty to one's slaves, which might explain why Sephardic authorities after 1733 made no manumissions on halakhic authority. Brana-Shute stated as much: “Neither Christian nor Jewish communicants in Suriname had the right to follow the dictates of religious conscience . . . unless they obtained the state's authorization.”⁹⁵ I have not come across any mention of protest from the *parnasim*, however, nor any grants for the special authorization described. Should one assume that manumissions

given in wills executed before Jewish notaries or *parnasim* needed and received authorization from the court? Repeated issuance of legislation concerning slave manumissions indicates that the population of owners, no doubt Jews included, failed to satisfactorily comply. But I have not seen any evidence that would indicate whether this loss of control became an issue for the Sephardim or had any impact, and if so what kind, on their practice of granting liberty to slaves. It is surprising that the Sephardim, so jealous of their rights, would not have fought for the prerogative of raising slaves in their own religion, unless the matter meant little to them. Also difficult is squaring the governmental intrusion regarding manumission with what Brana-Shute wrote about the Paramaribo Moravians of the early nineteenth century, who were permitted to preach to and convert their own slaves, “as no one could object,” as if the religion of one's slaves was a private matter.⁹⁶ Generally, the Dutch colonial owners and managers did not intervene in the religious affairs of the Jews and their slaves. And, finally, we saw with regard to the circumcision, that is, conversion, of at least some slaves belonging to Jews that it was done. Very possibly, then, the government's rule was either rescinded or not enforced in practice.

Of the Jewish manumissions committed to writing, only a rare few occurred before the death of the owner. In Barbados, in 1711 one Manuel Na[h]mias “release[d] for ever one negro boy named Jack.”⁹⁷ A Jamaican Jew, Solomon Franco, freed his slave woman Anne during his lifetime because she “hath faithfully and honestly served me.”⁹⁸ Most manumissions came as part of the “last will and testament” of owners, as was true among non-Jewish owners, at least in Surinam.⁹⁹ Although these often were put to paper long before the actual death of the owner, they contained the intention or promise to liberate, not its enactment (and even that not always effected in reality). Brana-Shute noted that even slaves manumitted in a last will and testament might not be “able to muster the kind of support necessary to force executors to comply with the wishes of a late owner.”¹⁰⁰ Still, there is no gainsaying the significance of emancipation for the slave.

Other social factors emerge from the Curacaoan data collected by Van der Lee. One sees that slaves belonging to Jews frequently gained liberation not at the hands of their masters but at the hands of free Blacks and mulattos, sometimes other slaves belonging to the same family.¹⁰¹ While in these cases the master had to give his permission, the fact of payment by another colored person implies that the impetus for the slave's manumission might not have originated with the master. Some free colored people sponsored the manumission of slaves belonging to both Jews and non-Jews, showing that the slaves belonging to Jews circulated within the general colored society of the island, where relationships of kinship and familiarity crossed the religious boundaries of the masters' world, and benefited from its mutual-aid mechanisms.¹⁰² In some cases, Jews sponsored

the manumissions of slaves belonging to non-Jews, while in others, non-Jewish Whites sponsored the manumissions of slaves belonging to Jews.¹⁰³ One finds freed slaves of color with Sephardic and non-Sephardic family names owning slaves.¹⁰⁴

Some information surfaces regarding religious aspects of the manumissions enacted by Curacoan Jews. A noticeable proportion of the manumissions by Sephardic owners seem to have coincided with either the Jewish New Year, occurring in the fall, or the spring holiday of Passover. Such timing indicates a degree of self-conscious religious contextualization, if not motivation, surrounding the act of liberating slaves. One Black slave child belonging to Abraham Dias Coutino, Domingito, was manumitted in 1743 at the age of eight days, an act linking the time for circumcision of a house-born male slave and his liberation.¹⁰⁵ Whether Domingito actually underwent circumcision cannot be said. No halakhic demand stood behind the choice of timing in this case, although the decision reflected a desire to frame the act with religious significance. For the most part, however, Curacoan Jewish owners used legal and verbal terms in manumitting slaves identical to those used by the island's other populations.

Regardless of geography, manumissions constituted essentially an act of mercy. Jewish owners released slaves from service for the same reasons as did non-Jewish owners. Some of the Sephardic owners on Curaçao freed male slaves so that the latter could work as sailors, something for which they needed proof of their having been manumitted, as many slaves escaped by going to sea on one of the ships frequently leaving the port of Willemstad without the permission of their masters.¹⁰⁶ Conditions of manumission also evince great similarity across religious lines. Regarding Surinam, Brana-Shute noted that the most frequently cited reason owners gave for manumitting a slave entailed the wish to reward a slave for loyal or trustworthy service and/or because the owner felt a special affection toward the slave.¹⁰⁷ Curacoan slave owners of all religious backgrounds released slaves "for true service" or "out of kindness."¹⁰⁸ The will of Surinamese Sephardi Josseph Gabay Farro elaborated a generous scenario of unconditional liberation for two mulattas, Jael and Simha.¹⁰⁹ Some slaves manumitted by Jews received generous gifts from their masters. Josseph de Samuel Nassy of Surinam, in his will of 1757, gave pensions of 30 florins each to several slaves.¹¹⁰ Other manumissions expressed less generosity. The last will and testament of one Barbados owner bequeathed to his blind son a slave, who might be freed only at the son's death if he remained blind.¹¹¹ The freedom of the slave depended solely and precariously on the master's favor. Though beneficent, an owner's act of manumission reconfirmed the legal inequality making the slave system possible, made particularly clear by the language of another Barbados will in which liberty was eventually to be granted to a slave woman, Consciencia, "without

any person or persons, heirs of myself or my wife, having the right to keep her captive."¹¹² The White owner, then, could demand terms respectful of the very rights whose trampling allowed her initial enslavement, kept her enslaved despite the protests of her own (legally unrecognized) person, and would keep her enslaved until the death of the White man's wife to whom she was being given.

Slaves were usually handed down to the next generation. Slaves with personal familiarity with a family and its children were often given to the children of owners. One thoughtful parent from Barbados presented to each of his children the help deemed necessary to maintain a household: His daughter Rebecca was to receive "one Mallatta Woo by name jubah with her son Ventur," his son David "one Negro boy by name Cuffy," and his daughter Sarah "one Negroe Woman by name Mally."¹¹³ A woman of the same island divvied up her slaves among her children as follows:

to her son Hezekiah – "two negro boys, called Robin and Johnny"
to Esther – "two negro slaves by name Esperansa & Peggy, women"
to Rachel – "a negro woman called Ruth"
to Hannah – "a negro woman called Franky"
to Rebecca – "two negro slaves by name Phillis, a woman, and little Esperansa a girl."¹¹⁴

One Surinamese man, lacking a son of his own, bequeathed to his nephew at his coming of age, and not before, "four Blacks newly off the boat," which his heirs were ordered to purchase for the nephew.¹¹⁵ Another bequeathed "three pieces of slaves," or the equivalent of three adult slaves, to his aunt "for her service."¹¹⁶ Jewish masters, like their non-Jewish counterparts, tried to ensure in their last wills and testaments that their children would receive the continued services of well-liked, devoted slaves. Sometimes manumission was given on condition that the slave to be freed would not cease providing the same services to the manumitting owner.¹¹⁷ Those who had grown dependent on the luxury of slave assistance found it hard to renounce.

In Surinam, even mulattos with Jewish names, who may be presumed to have had some minimal form of Jewish identity if not affiliation, were often handed down from parent to child. That is, their Jewishness did not make automatic their emancipation. So one widowed woman in 1766 presented her son with several slave women and their children, including the mulattos Ismael and Reuben.¹¹⁸ In Curaçao, one finds Blacks and mulattos with Sephardic family names who served as slaves to other owners, frequently non-Jews, obviously having been transferred through sale or bequeathal by their Jewish owners.¹¹⁹

Not all bequests went smoothly, and like other property, slaves might become the objects of dispute between family members. Such was the case with

"a certain Black creole woman called Serafina and her son Quacú" belonging to Ishak Pinto d'Afonseca. Afonseca's widow Sarah went to the official jurator of Jodensavanne on 24 September 1764 in order to contravene the explicit order of her defunct spouse's will, which stated that "the said Black woman should remain in the service of [Sarah] during her life."¹²⁰ One of the few requests for manumitting a slave to be denied by the Court of Policy and Criminal Justice in Surinam was that of Simha, a mulatto woman owned by Isak de Mercado Bomrey (or Bomrij) and freed in his last will and testament in 1760. Her freedom would be gained, according to the will, only when Bomrey's son turned six, a stipulation that Brana-Shute speculated Bomrey inserted in order to ensure his son familiar care.¹²¹ The court ruled, in light of the Bomrey estate's miserable financial situation, that her value for the creditors outweighed that of her owner's testament. She was eventually given liberty under the auspices of a legal guardian, the free Black Francisco, whose religion I could not ascertain.¹²²

As property, slaves bequeathed to a relative stood at the mercy of that relative's desires. She might choose to sell them, or give them over to yet another person. A clause from a 1767 Surinamese will, in which a husband allowed his wife to dispose of any inherited slaves as she might see fit, entailed a not-uncommon condition.¹²³ Another Surinamese will from the same era provided the estate's executors with the authority to sell two slaves to pay off debts, but stipulated the condition that they might not select slaves who have their mother, father, or siblings still alive on the plantation.¹²⁴ Wills often contained a clause reverting the possession of inherited slaves to other relatives, should the heirs die without children of their own.¹²⁵

The last such stipulations indicate the economic value of slaves, but may also show that those who insisted on inserting these clauses into their testaments believed that slaves *must* be passed down by Jewish law. This view had many adherents among the Jews of the Mediterranean region, as discussed in Chapter 2. Such, too, was the opinion of Rabbi Abraham Gabay Yzidro (eighteenth century), who served as rabbi in Surinam and then Barbados.¹²⁶ In his verse rendition of the 613 commandments according to Rambam, published posthumously by his widow in 1763, Gabay Yzidro explicitly juxtaposed the freeing of a Hebrew slave with the eternal employment of a non-Jewish slave:

And the slave of my holy people [i.e., a Jewish/Hebrew slave]
Sustain on his going free
But forever with the Kushite
Work at the task.¹²⁷

Joanna Westphal found some intriguing entries relating to the manumission of slaves in the Barbados congregation's minute book. In 1800, a woman named Judith Pereira was removed from the pension list for "having endeavored

to emancipate her negro woman." The mahamad preferred that she donate the slave to the congregation or sell her and donate the profits. She evidently promised to comply, as six months later Pereira was reinstated on the list, on condition that she "gives a deed to her nieces for her negro slave."¹²⁸ Control over the manumission of slaves constituted a common strategy in societies with numerous slaves. As of 1713, masters in the French Caribbean islands needed written permission from the governor general in order to free a slave.¹²⁹ Surinam's similar policy after 1733 was mentioned earlier. Perhaps the attitude of the parnasim on Barbados regarding Judith Pereira's slave reflected the perspective of adhering to the positive *mitzva* of not freeing non-Jewish slaves.

BURIAL

By the eighteenth century, racially segregated burial seems to have become the norm in Protestant colonial societies with any significant presence of Blacks. In 1723, the city of Boston mandated that Blacks and mulattos (as well as American Indians) be buried at "the nearest burying place (where Negroes are usually buried)," implying that Blacks were laid to rest in entirely separate graveyards.¹³⁰ Charles Leslie, writing in 1730s Jamaica about a ceremony that slaves held to ascertain whether any of their number stole an item found to be missing from their plantation, mentioned "that Spot of Ground which is appropriate for the Negroe's Burying-place," again implying that plantation slaves received separate burial.¹³¹ Toward the end of the century, Moreau de St. Méry, a Creole lawyer, legal theorist, and reformer from Saint-Domingue, noted when traveling in Philadelphia that the city possessed "an all-Negro cemetery" and that the city's Irish Catholic church on South Sixth Street "did not permit burial of Negroes in its cemetery."¹³²

None of the lists of tombstones collected from the Jewish cemeteries of the Western Hemisphere that I have been able to consult indicate the presence of servants or Blacks or mulattos.¹³³ The Black and colored slaves of Newport's Jewish residents "were buried in the Negro section of the town's Common Burial Ground, and not in the consecrated ground of the Jewish community's *Beth Haim*."¹³⁴ It remains possible, of course, that some of the few people whose tombstone bears a name "Ger" (= convert) or "So-and-so son of Abraham" or "daughter of Sarah" might represent a converted slave, as might an unmarked grave or silent tombstone. A grave marked "child" of so-and-so could contain the child of a master and slave woman, but without corroborating evidence, one should hesitate to draw conclusions. Surinam poses the single possible exception (see the next paragraph). As mentioned earlier, Curacoan Jews did not convert their slaves. Indeed, not one Black or mulatto convert is mentioned in Isaac S. Emmanuel's 558 pages of text on the Jewish cemetery of Curaçao and its

tombstones.¹³⁵ The Curacaoan community seems to have prevented the need for a separate colored section through a de facto policy of exclusion of slaves from Jewish religious life.

In one place other than Amsterdam, in Jodensavanne, Surinam, some of the few colored Jews were buried in the cemetery, showing that here, at least, burial practices followed halakhic rather than "racial" principles. Even this situation, however, was not consistent and could not undo the tremendous social pressures against the conversion of slaves. Rachel Frankel, who has conducted field trips to Jodensavanne, admitted that the question of separate sections in the Jodensavanne cemeteries for Jews of African descent remains unanswered.¹³⁶ It may be that those few Blacks and mulattos who merited burial in Jodensavanne's main two cemeteries were buried along with the poor Sephardim in the less desirable southern half.¹³⁷ Further, it seems that a separate and third cemetery later existed, some 300 yards away, for the community's "free non-Jews, most of who [sic] had mixed Sephardic-African ancestry." This latter came to be known as the slave or Creole cemetery.¹³⁸ Among the many Jewish communities in the Americas in which slaves were owned, only in Surinam did some slaves become Jewish enough to merit a burial official enough for scholars to recognize.

NAMES

What's in a slave name? Among other things, the master's pleasure of seeing himself reproduced. According to Wilfred S. Samuel, "the Judeo-Dutch congregations in Guiana and Curaçao . . . bestowed on [their slaves] the high sounding polysyllabic names which they themselves had brought from the Iberian peninsula."¹³⁹ Although only a minority of cases conformed to Samuel's assertion, as I will show, his phrasing underscores the aspect of the process of naming slaves connected to identity formation.¹⁴⁰ The bestowal itself, the carrying on of the name, absorbs an enormous amount of significance, of fetishization almost, a sigh: that the abject other, carrying *our* beloved name, is raised upward. Yet this fetishized bestowal results from a sociological process: the coerced intimacy of the master-slave relationship. But did Jews name their slaves differently than non-Jews? Answering this question constitutes an unusually difficult task.

Few sources indicate who gave slaves their names. Scholars continue to debate the issue, whose outcome carries crucial implications for interpreting the significance of slave names. Most recently, Trevor Burnard "found no evidence that slaves named themselves."¹⁴¹ Though this might be overstating the case, we still know very little about the naming practices of slave masters, whether slaves insisted on the use of their real names, whether owners renamed adult slaves on purchasing them, whether the task of finding names devolved onto the overseers of large plantations, or whether children born to slaves were named

by parents or owners or managers. Practice no doubt varied from colony to colony, perhaps from master to master. A few bits of data surface now and again. Jean Goupy des Marets, a supervisor on a plantation in French Cayenne from 1688 to 1690, "took care to discover the African name and birthplace of every slave on the estate," finding that although they bore the saints names imposed along with their baptism by their French master, "they were called by various African names among their comrades." Yet slaves from a Kongolesse cultural background had "no names in an African language but instead had Portuguese names, which had been translated into French."¹⁴² Here, then, a multiple identity persisted in separate naming layers, although we remain ignorant about which names were used in everyday life and whether among the slaves themselves or in interaction with White society, and although even the "authentic" African identity might carry traces of an earlier European influence. Hence, John Thornton cautioned that researchers "have no way of knowing how many apparently Euro-American slave names were actually the names of Angolans [or Kongolesse] given in Africa from a long tradition of giving baptismal names."¹⁴³ An Englishman living temporarily in Jamaica from 1687 to 1688 stated that the White overseers were responsible for naming the slaves on plantations.¹⁴⁴ In 1754, the absentee owner of the Egypt plantation in western Jamaica sent his manager, Thomas Thistlewood, a newly arrived Ibo slave, whom *the slaves* named Hector. More "new Negroes" arrived soon after, whom "we," the manager Thistlewood and the slaves together, wrote Thistlewood in his journal, named Adam, Nero, Morris, and Moll.¹⁴⁵ These scenes conjure up amusing images: Africans, themselves probably not so well "seasoned," bandying about the classical name "Hector" for a freshly arrived "colleague." But, more importantly, it shows that slaves might well have been involved with the naming of other slaves. The first generation of children born to the South Carolina Ball family slaves Windsor and Angola Ame (between 1743 and 1758) included names like "Christmas" and "Easter," both given to children born on or in proximity to the respective holidays. Such names indicate "either direct owner interference or the recognition of the Christian and work holidays of Christmas and Easter by Windsor and Angola Ame, who applied the content to an African form" of naming.¹⁴⁶

Obviously, even African names may not have signified the hand of a Black name giver, as many European planters and slave owners had become familiar with African names.¹⁴⁷ The allowance by owners of their use itself indicates something about the owners' vision of their own identity and that of the slave, although it may also reflect nothing more than absentee ownership or a large slave population, cases where it seems unlikely that the owners themselves dispensed names to the slave children.¹⁴⁸ Treating mostly nineteenth-century slaves from South Carolina, Herbert G. Gutman found that "slave children

often were named for blood kin (particularly fathers, aunts and uncles, and grandparents).¹⁴⁹ Still, even here one cannot be certain that the slaves named their own children, as the masters were as aware as the slaves of these family ties.¹⁵⁰ The major problem that arises is the distinguishing of this namesaking from the similar namesaking of the owners, who also "frequently used the paternal grandfather's name," for example.¹⁵¹ Yet slaves "reused owner-influenced names as kin names and in this way made them their own."¹⁵² In sum, the patterning of slave names remains fraught with the complexities of the intermingled cultures and values shared and contested by slave and master.

Slave names were usually "taken from the masters' stock of names or from classical or geographical sources," in the case of masters of all backgrounds, though for the time being I am focusing on Christian masters.¹⁵³ In medieval and early modern Mediterranean Europe, the most common names for slaves, especially female slaves, tended to be those of popular saints.¹⁵⁴ Many slaves bore simple personal names, what Michael Mullin calls "nondescript Anglo-Saxon names" or the equivalent:¹⁵⁵ George, Amos, Jack, Kate, Amy (or Amie), Molly, Lucy, Dick, and Jan. Some slave names alluded to desirable human characteristics, such as "Alert," or beneficent forces, such as "Fortuijn" or "Good Luck." Other positive general terms saw use as names, such as Bienvenue. Other names constituted comments of a different sort, with allusions to less desirable characteristics – in Surinam, "Hasard," meaning "gamble," was "a common slave name."¹⁵⁶ Characteristics of female slaves deemed noteworthy often alluded to sexuality: "Coquette," constituted the sobriquet of one Surinamese slave, while a South Carolina slave woman had the name Pussy.¹⁵⁷ Names often referenced the slave's Blackness, as in "Chocolaad." Some slave names merely denoted the slave's function, as in "Bootsman / Boatman" (Surinam). Names might also reference a place, though perhaps for varying reasons: Bristol and York are names found among slaves in English colonies.

Christian owners, and not just Jews, bestowed on some of their slaves biblical names, such as Abraham, Aron, and Samson for slaves of a Protestant Surinamese master.¹⁵⁸ A slave on Curaçao possessed the name Berseba.¹⁵⁹ One South Carolina slave bore the name Kain.¹⁶⁰ The slave names Sarah, Rachel, Jacob, Samuel, Hannah, Dina, Hagar, Esther, or the like cannot be cited to determine the religion of the owner.¹⁶¹ Many owners gave their slaves names derived from classical antiquity, such as Cato, Brutus, Caesar, Adonis, Nero, Titus, Jupiter, Apollo, Coridon, Scipio, Pompey, Hercules, and Juno for men slaves. For some reason, women received classical names more rarely, but options included Cleopatra, Daphne, Diana, Phoebe, and Sophia (usually Sophie). One Curacoan slave bore the name "Rijna Isabella / Queen Isabel."¹⁶² Similar are names such as Sultan, Marquis, perhaps even Columbus. Richard Price called the men and women who chose such "high" names "'ironic' masters."¹⁶³

Richard Burton quoted Ira Berlin writing that the choice of these names was "a kind of cosmic jest: the more insignificant the person in the eyes of the planters, the greater the name."¹⁶⁴ Writing of England, Peter Fryer thought that the use of "high-sounding" Greek or Roman names reflected social pretensions among "titled families, . . . high-class prostitutes," and others.¹⁶⁵ Some of the names planters gave slaves normally fell to "dogs, horses, donkeys or cows ('Jumper,' 'Gamesome,' 'Ready,' 'Juno,' 'Caesar,' 'Fido,' and so forth)."¹⁶⁶

Few of the slaves of Caribbean Jews bore "Jewish" names, that is, usually text-based names traditionally used by Jews for themselves. A review of slave names from around the Sephardic Caribbean bears this out, while showing some of the nuanced ways these names often functioned to demarcate status within the Jewish community.

Joanna Westphal wrote of Barbados that a "common practice seemed to entail giving slaves Jewish first names," but it depends, I suppose, on what one means by "common."¹⁶⁷ For Barbados, I rely on an analysis of names in the 57 Sephardic wills from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries presented in part and full by Wilfred Samuel and Bertram Wallace Korn.¹⁶⁸ While 125 slaves were mentioned in 29 wills, only 101 of the slaves were named.¹⁶⁹ The list of names appears in Appendix 1. Esperansa is one of two names (along with Peggy) appearing the most (6 each), while the three second-most-frequent names are Mary, Phillis, and Quasheba (or a close variant). Those names borne by two slaves are Abba, Diana, Hagar, Jack, Johnny, Primus, and Rose. By the crudest of calculations, perhaps some 10 percent of all of the slave names in the sample are "Jewish" if one includes Iberian and biblical names – both as easily deriving from previous Christian namers or owners. Of the 42 slaves listed as boys or girls, 11 possess names with "Jewish" significance in the widest possible sense, making about 19 percent. That children bore such names at double the rate of adult slaves might indicate more of a Jewish contribution than otherwise surmised, or more acculturation by slaves into the culture of their masters. Aside from "Jewish" names, the names borne by slaves of Barbadian Jews compare quite strongly with the names popular among Protestant masters.¹⁷⁰ The significance of the seemingly high percentages of "Jewish" names fades on closer analysis, however.

One Barbadian Sephardic merchant had a woman slave named Hagar, although the slave's children bore the less traditional names of Violet and Phillis. Perhaps the children's names were given by their mother and not their master, although they might as well indicate the degree of acculturation to English norms the merchant family experienced (chose?) in the years between the purchase of the mother and the birth of her children.¹⁷¹ One woman gave her son chase of the mother and the birth of her children.¹⁷¹ One woman gave her son her "negroe slaves Addah" a woman and Richmond a boy." Here again we find a slave woman with what is possibly a biblical name (Ada, wife of Lamech or

of Esav [and grandmother of Amalek]), though her child bears a commonly applied English name, in this case a place name. Again, however, we do not know who chose the child's name.¹⁷² One finds Iberian names more often than Hebrew names, not surprising given the Iberian and Christian roots of many of these families. Of course, the possession of an Iberian name does not necessitate a slave's being Jewish or even named by a Jew. Many slaves circulated among Spanish, English, and Dutch territories, as can be seen clearly from the many Spanish names among the slaves of non-Jewish Curacaoan owners.¹⁷³ "Santo" or "Clarina" held no particular Jewish traces that I can identify.¹⁷⁴ "Esperanto," the name of one "Cormanty" woman slave, might reflect particularly Jewish hopes.¹⁷⁵ A Portuguese name such as "Macaco," borne by one Black slave of a Jewish merchant, hardly signified Jewishness; it means "monkey."¹⁷⁶ Most of the slaves of Jews, in fact, bore the same names typically given by English masters and mistresses, such as the two slaves Warwick and Violet belonging to a Barbadian Sephardic woman.¹⁷⁷

Some cases nicely hint at the multiplicity of identity within households in this time and place. Miriam Arobas of St. Michael, Barbados, had four daughters and one son, all bearing biblical names, while her nine slaves consisted of two Esperancas, one Peggy, one Phillis, one woman named Franky, two boys named Robin and Johnny, and one woman with the biblical name Ruth.¹⁷⁸ Those on the inside of the collective Jewish identity, that is, received names approved and encouraged by the tradition, while those on the outside received "other" names. If the Esperancas represent Jews, which is doubtful, their names are "only" Iberian, not biblical, though of course a name conjuring up the hope of those persecuted and forcibly exiled bore great resonance, hence the name's popularity among Sephardim.¹⁷⁹ The slave woman Ruth, the exception, may have converted to Judaism or shown allegiance to her mistress's religion or merely been subject to her mistress's fondness for biblical names; the name's allusions, in any event, point to an optimistic desire on the mistress's part for a loyal and admiring servant. If we knew more about the Arobas household, we could perhaps determine whether the mistress's fondness for biblical names signified a willingness to bring slaves into Judaism as well. The merchant Moses deAzevedo, ritually knowledgeable enough to perform circumcisions, owned 8 slaves and "a couple of Barocos servants." The slaves, all named, were Mary, Esperanto, Diana, and Zabelina, the latter possessing daughters Bashe and Maria and son Cain.¹⁸⁰ Esperanto represents an Iberian name of possible Jewish significance, Zabelina might be a form of Isabel, and the other slaves bore non-Jewish names. Zabelina's children could have been named by or along with the owner(s). Of these children, Bashe might be a form of Batsheba, and hence of possible Jewish significance; Cain, obviously biblical, bears a highly negative meaning, and is equally plausible coming from a Jew or a Christian.

Jamaica evinces similar patterns. A random sample of the names of 31 slaves named in 15 wills of Jamaican Sephardim yields an unimpressive list of "Jewish" names (see Appendix 2), though the sample is admittedly too small to generate conclusive results.¹⁸¹ The list differs insignificantly from the list of the most popular slave names given by White Protestants of the island.¹⁸² A Sephardic merchant of St. Catherine parish listed the following slaves in his will of 1729: a mulatta named Bess and her child Nancy, Phibbah, a Black woman, and another mulatto called Ismael.¹⁸³ The last name, while biblical, hardly constitutes a "Jewish" name. One colored person belonged to Simha de Torres (d. 1746), who moved at some point in her life from Jamaica to New York, later importing "a Negro slave Menasseh Perirei (Pereira)."¹⁸⁴ This slave's first and last names testify to his having been named by a Jew or having taken on a Jewish name, most probably with some form of Jewish identity as well. Yet his name appears unconnected to the woman who brought him to New York, leaving the precise nature of his identification a mystery.

A survey of a handful of late-eighteenth-century plantation inventories from Sephardic Surinam provides yet another sense of the spread of Jewish names among slaves (see Appendix 3). Patterns in this purely plantation Jewish community show slight differences from the urban pattern found among Jews on Barbados and Jamaica. Of the 532 slaves named in the 10 inventories, 112 bear "Jewish" names in the widest sense, including any kind of Iberian name, that is, around 21 percent of all of the slaves. But of this 21 percent, probably half should be eliminated because the names, though Iberian, hardly announce any Jewish identity (Maria, Mariana, Luzia, Rozelina, Flora, etc.). As mentioned, these Iberian names might have been received by the slave already in Portuguese Africa. It must be noted that many of these names derived from popular saints.¹⁸⁵ Many of the names comprise obvious equivalents from the Iberian repertoire to the range chosen by non-Jewish owners (Primeiro [rather popular], Espadilha, Moso, Avanzo, Abril, etc.). The slave names are not necessarily the same as those that seem to have been popular among Iberian Jews themselves (Beatris, Luna, Isabela, Blanca, etc.), indicating little more than the degree to which Sephardic Jews named slaves as Iberians. Some of the "Jewish" names, such as Agar and Ismael, announce the bearer's Otherness, even while inscribing her within the community. All things considered, perhaps 10 percent of the slaves in the sample bear names of convincing and significant Jewish provenance (Isaq, Simha, Reuben, Abram, Jael, Purim, Jacoba, Daniel, Esperansa, etc.). On the basis of this very narrow survey, it appears that the percentage of "Jewish" names on smaller plantations might have been higher than on large plantations. If this was indeed the case, it lends weight to the argument that "Jewishness" in naming patterns was very much a function of sociological setting.

Those slaves who bore Jewish names overwhelmingly came from the lighter-skinned mixed-race group. Of the 22 slaves listed as mulattos, fully 15 men, women, girls, and boys bore clearly Jewish names, making an astonishing 68 percent of the total. These were almost certainly children of slave women with Jewish fathers. The occupations listed in the second column help correlate their favored status with their lighter and more palatable color. Their names are more consistently fully positive from the Jewish perspective (Daniel, David, Isaq, Simha, Reuben, etc.). The name distribution of the slaves of the just-deceased Abraham Monsanto, given by his widow Ester to their son Abraham Nemis (?) Monsanto in 1766, are typical: "Constansia with her 4 children called Apelles [?], Lois, Seri [?] + Ismael, mulatto, as also a Black woman named ajuba, + her son Reuben Mulato."¹⁸⁶ The pattern emerges more starkly when comparing the lighter-colored slaves with Jewish names to the entire population of a given plantation. The 1763 inventory of the Nieuwe Staar (New Star) plantation provides the names of 23 male and 28 female slaves, 4 boy slaves, 4 girl slaves, and 3 mulatto children. Only one recognizably Jewish male name appears, Isaq, listed as the mulatto son of David Pinto (not the owner) with an unidentified slave woman.¹⁸⁷ A 1767 inventory of the Petiet Versailles (Little Versailles) plantation belonging to Rephael del Castilho presents 40 male, 23 female, and 3 minor slaves. Of these, the only recognizably Jewish name belongs to one woman named Judy, and this name of course could have derived from a Christian owner.¹⁸⁸

As in Jamaica, several slaves named Adam can be found owned by Jews. Though biblical, Adam was not used as a Jewish name. Its use for slaves carries connotations of anonymity, of the primordial, perhaps even the liminally human. According to Richard Price, "Daniel" was "a common name of slaves with Jewish masters."¹⁸⁹ A handful of slaves named Simha (= happiness) appear in community records. A list of the slaves belonging to Surinamese Jewish planters who ran away from a 1755 expedition against the Maroons contained two slaves named "Elieser," the name of the biblical patriarch Abraham's beloved slave.¹⁹⁰ Several plantations featured male slaves named Purim. Many slaves of Jews received the same kinds of names traditional among non-Jewish masters. In the latter half of the eighteenth century, plantation owner J. del Castilho named an extremely strong slave of his Goliath, a name belonging in the Bible to a feared but routed Philistine enemy.¹⁹¹ Some masters were fond of names drawn from the Greco-Roman world. The prominent Isaak Nassy possessed (ca. 1773) a slave named Cesar.¹⁹² Isaak Messias and Isaak (?) Pinto had women slaves named, respectively, Diana and Lucrecia (ca. 1776).¹⁹³ In all of these cases, though, it is not clear whether the Jewish masters gave the name or bought the slave already so named.

The Surinamese data also show how difficult it is to identify the namers of the slaves. Slave names in Dutch fail to point to a giver: They could derive from Christian Dutch overseers as well as former masters or ship captains or even from Jewish owners who sought non-Jewish names for their slaves. Even an Iberian name for a slave cannot be taken to indicate a Jewish provenance. Slaves were moved around continually, even between supposedly hostile powers. Throughout the period of the slave trade, Portuguese, British, and Dutch colonies reexported a certain number of slaves.¹⁹⁴ London, the name for one slave, probably born in Africa, who belonged to the Protestant Dutch Surinamese planter van Sandick at the time of a 1762 inventory, could have derived from his origin in the English slave system as easily as from his master's fondness for that city.¹⁹⁵ Yet masters and mistresses clearly had some say in the matter. Perhaps this can be detected on the Surinamese Jewish plantation Kleyn Jálúzie, where many of the slaves had distinctly Iberian names, a reflection of the background of the owner Abraham Gabay Fonseca.¹⁹⁶

Patterns among Sephardim on Curaçao differed little from those in the other communities (see Appendix 4). Certainly, some clearly Jewish names appear, although even here one cannot be sure what exactly constitutes a Jewish name and whether the names did not originate with Christian owners (Anna, Adam, Catharina, Esperansa, Jacob, Joseph, Rephaela, Simon, Susanna). But again, on closer look, the "Jewishness" of these names dissipates. Of the 26 slave women named with some variation of Esperansa in the Curacaoan manumission records, a name seemingly laden with *Marrano* emotion, 9 (possibly 8) had belonged to Jewish owners, while 17 (possibly 18) had belonged to non-Jews. Again, without knowing their life history, we cannot say who named them, with whom they had served, and at what ages. Out of 23 slaves named Jacob, Jacobus, or the like, only 4 (possibly 5) had belonged to Jews. Joseph yielded a somewhat clearer religious provenance: Of 15 slaves with this name, 11 had been owned by Jews (while of the non-Jewish masters at least 2 were clergymen). Of course, this kind of manumission data cannot reveal under whose ownership these slaves received their identities, but it warns us away from overconfident assignments of affinity. One intriguing name, borne by several women, was Sebel, probably a diminutive for Isabel but also possibly the Hebrew word for suffering, used perhaps in the sense of the Spanish name Paciencia. The ponderance of Iberian names with Christian overtones, many of them saints' names, cannot be missed. Among the more popular Iberian names of slaves in the possession of Jews as well as non-Jews was Maria Magdalena and several permutations of Maria.¹⁹⁷ One slave was named Alexandre Obispo. Again we find Iberian names with no Jewish meaning: The name Servina, carried by several slave women, might have been a perverse word play on their servile

status. Where we know the names of children born to slaves belonging to Jews, rarely can any Jewish significance be gleaned. The slave woman Gracia Isabel, who belonged to Jacob de Ephraim Jezurun Henriquez, named her son Juan Baptista; the Black woman Susanna, owned by Mosseh Penso, had three children named Maria Martha, Magdaleentje, and Joseph; while Maria Magdalena Henriques had two sons named Phelis and Gerard.¹⁹⁸ The free mulatta Maria Gracia Senior manumitted her slave Losia, who had three children, named Juan Domingo, Juan Louis, and Maria.¹⁹⁹ These findings pose no surprise given the exclusion of all non-Whites from the island's Jewish community.

An intriguing related issue for Curaçao is that of family names. Freed slaves apparently often had their family name determined by their about-to-be-former owners. Even if they received the same surname, however, they remained outside Judaism.²⁰⁰ This seems to be a nineteenth-century practice. The names given by the owners, interestingly enough, purposefully established some slight differentiation between the master's name and that to be borne by the slave: "Thus Jezurun was altered to Zurun [,] Senior changed into Junior, and so on."²⁰¹ One sees from Appendix 4 that relatively few of these names came to slaves from their masters, instead coming more consistently from the men who had fathered children with their mothers or who sponsored their manumission (often, no doubt, the same person). Many of the slaves received the exact surname of their master. Still, the overwhelming majority of colored people bearing Sephardic family names had decidedly Christian first names. Like many of their Sephardic owners, these "mixed-race" slaves often bore a multiple identity. A mestizo youth bearing the Sephardic family name Johannes Curiel also went by the name Johannes Baptist.²⁰² Some of the female slaves of Isaak Jezurun possessed both Iberian and Dutch names ("Maria Sebel alias Bettje" and her daughter "Maria Susanna alias Mietje").²⁰³ A slave of Lea van Moses Touro was recorded as "Maria Magdalena alias Eva."²⁰⁴ The one name most probably came from a Jewish mistress, while the other name might have been that by which the slave went in general society or among her friends. In order to better understand the identity at work here, however, we need to know more about the contexts in which the different names were used.

Again, I emphasize that these statistics regarding names are meant to be suggestive rather than definitive. Still, as can be seen in the case of Surinam, but as seems to have been true elsewhere, those slaves bearing "Jewish" names tended to belong to the mulatto segment, more privileged than darker slaves. Many of the Iberian names borne by slaves possessed clear Christian denotations or lacked any particular Jewish quotient (Dominga, Primera, Maria, Anna, etc.). If these names were bestowed by Jewish masters, it might indicate that

the slaves were also left to align themselves with or remain in Christian society. As Iberian names, these names sometimes gave slaves the same Iberian provenance as that of their owners' Christian names, while the owners reserved for themselves "authentic" Jewish names, whether Iberian or biblical. In light of the onomastic divisions within Sephardic society, it was typical that only Sephardic women sometimes retained an Iberian name as their official name; all of the men were listed on their tombstones by their Hebrew name. Many of the women's names were formed with a diminutive in the Portuguese style, such as Ajubinha, Zabelinha. The diminutive form signifies exactly what its name implies: Although many of these names were of Iberian origin, they were formulated with a view toward condescendingly or cutely distinguishing their bearers from Whites – full persons – with the same names.

To end this discussion, it should be remembered that even possession of a "Jewish" name says little on its own about slave religiosity or identity. Some Jews did, of course, bestow Iberian and Jewish names on some of their slaves, possibly, from the statistics, even as often as they had a chance to name or rename slaves. It is fitting that Jews who had suffered because of the Inquisition might have named their slaves Esperansa, Fortuna, Paciencia, or even Vitoria. The significance of these names, and that of the act of their bestowal, however, remains far from straightforward without further contextual clues. The fact that eighteenth-century merchant Jacob Valverde of Speightstown, Barbados, possessed a slave woman Esparansa and a boy Purim might mean that Valverde named them and perhaps shared a certain closeness with them as well. But it might also tell us only – even assuming he or someone in his household or employ named them – that when a name was needed, as the household possessed more than twelve slaves, the masters reached into the stock of names known to them, including the Jewish equivalents to slave names used by Christians, whether by tradition or adoption.²⁰⁵ In addition, even when employing "Jewish" names, many of the choices – Purim, Juan Rimón (lit., pomegranate in Hebrew), Cain, Is(h)mael, Hagar, Nebuchadnezzar – reveal a distinct effort to distance the person named from the "legitimate" or inner community of Jews/masters.²⁰⁶ Even such positive names as Adam, Reuben, or Eva denote choices never applied to White Jews themselves, as a comparison with the names of Sephardic Jews from Curaçao and Jamaica shows (see Appendixes 5 and 6).²⁰⁷ A similar process of distancing seems to have operated with family names in Curaçao. Still, the overwhelming majority of slaves belonging to Jews, even in Curaçao, bore only a single name and/or nickname. Like pets and beasts of burden, they lacked the signifiers of communal and familial ties accorded by Whites to themselves and one another. Further, that even slaves with "Jewish" names sometimes were penned into wills for the purpose of being sold or bequeathed

speaks volumes about the kind of consideration their "Jewish" identity received from their owners.

THE OWNERS' RELIGIOSITY

Curaçao and Surinam constituted two of the more observant communities of the Caribbean. In Curaçao, Rabbi Jossiao Pardo arrived toward the end of the seventeenth century and established an *eruv* to allow carrying on *Shabbat*.²⁰⁸ There, too, according to a witness in 1825, the Sephardic planters followed "a number of religious laws relative to agriculture and cattle-breeding, and so doing...lost a part of the produce" of their plantations.²⁰⁹ In Surinam, marriages were done according to halakhic specifications, with *ketubot* often drawn up in Aramaic (itself bespeaking a certain amount of expertise in the area of traditional knowledge). Young planters chasing runaway slaves in the forests took the time to conduct morning and evening prayers even while visiting a Maroon village in 1761.²¹⁰ A mid-eighteenth-century letter to the Ashkenazic Philadelphia merchant Michael Gratz speaks of someone who had just "received a case of kosher Portuguese cheese from his brother in Surinam," indicating that some Jewish planters produced kosher cheese (and exported it to their struggling fellow Jews in the northern English colonies).²¹¹ A 1787 note from Newport, Rhode Island, which accompanied a shipment of kosher beef to Surinam, assured the recipient "that any Jew may eat of it without the slightest scruple."²¹² The Jodensavanne community gathered for every Sabbath and festival observance until the population drain to Paramaribo forced the termination of services around the end of the eighteenth century. Many other such indications of religious observance exist.

It is clear that the communal leadership enforced religious practice as rigorously as possible in communal settings and on individuals in the public sphere (and even in the "private" domain). The limits of such enforcement, however, come across clearly in the documentation as well, revealing that personal religious observance might not have always matched expectations. In October 1769, one planter, Ishak Vazfarro, remained at home from synagogue with his family and some others on Yom Kippur.²¹³ As already mentioned, in 1774, the parnasim at Jodensavanne dealt with a master who had ordered his slaves and workers to work on the Sabbath. In May 1777, planter Mos. A. Coutinho was similarly charged with sailing on the Suriname River on the Sabbath with two women slaves, in order to take them somewhere.²¹⁴ These incidents, of course, constitute only those about which the parnasim got wind. Given the distances at which most of the Jewish plantations lay from Jodensavanne, many other incidents must have escaped their notice. Scottish mercenary John Gabriel Stedman described (in the 1770s) an interaction with

one "Israelite" outside the latter's home. The Jew had a "naked pate," from which I infer that he was not wearing a *kippah*, the traditional men's head covering.²¹⁵ Elsewhere, Stedman noted how he had observed Jewish soldiers "devour[ing] pork and bacon, without scruple or hesitation, as often as they could find it," although this might have been due to the fact that, in the bush, "animal food... was at this time so very scarce, that even the Jew soldiers of the Society troops devoured salt pork as fast as they could catch it."²¹⁶

The Sephardim who emigrated to the American colonies were not unreligious, then. Although they faced pressures to acculturate in many ways, the pressures often focused on slaveholding practices because of the extent to which the possession and use of slaves posed a basic norm of the colonies. Having never seen a text from this period that discusses the halakhot of slaves in the Americas, I can only assume that the Sephardic laypeople and rabbis, insofar as they considered the issue at all, chose to follow those rabbinic opinions that obviated the Jewish owner of slaves from following slave-related halakha. Sephardic slave owners did not completely abandon traditional practices regarding slaves. Indeed, in Surinam and Curaçao, slaves appear to have been allowed to rest on *Shabbat*. Newport merchant Aaron Lopez did not ask slaves he hired from other owners to "perform work in bad weather, either 'Extreame cold' in winter or heavy rain in the fall."²¹⁷ The 1794 letter written by the parnasim to the colony's governor stated that the children of the Jewish planters and their female "slaves or mulattos" were "born out of wedlock after [the] manumission [of their mother]."²¹⁸ This language – if it is not mere posturing for moral effect or to avoid appearing to transgress the stipulation that liberated slaves had to be or to avoid appearing to transgress the stipulation that liberated slaves had to be educated in Christianity – suggests that the planters followed the halakhic principle that children take on the status of their mother (though secular law also followed this principle). Since the children were born free, after their mothers' emancipation, they could be accepted as Jews more easily.

As discussed in Chapter 7, the Egyptian Rabbi David ibn Zimra already allowed for the possibility of holding an uncircumcised, unconverted slave in the diaspora without time limit. As detailed in earlier chapters, some later rabbis followed suit, holding that the laws pertaining to non-Jewish slaves no longer held force, that is, effectively though perhaps not intentionally permitting Jews to hold slaves without attention to halakhic requirements. Thus, in response to a 1767 query, Rabbi David de Rephael Meldola held that the positive command "to work them [non-Jewish slaves] forever" (Lev. 25:46) held force only over the literal historical Canaanite slaves and not "at this time," even though Meldola continued to use the term "Canaanite slave."²¹⁹ The import of the debate over the authority of the laws of Canaanite slaves should not be exaggerated. Holding that the laws pertaining to Canaanite slaves no longer function is not necessarily the same thing as desiring or ordaining the end of the practice of slavery.

By the eighteenth century, each of the larger Caribbean communities had a rabbi of one sort or another most of the time (Barbados, Jamaica, Curaçao, Surinam). Dutch Brazil for a while in the mid-seventeenth century had the eminent Rabbi Isaac Aboab, so it cannot be argued that these were ignorant, formerly Christian refugees who knew little or nothing of rabbinic law. If concerns about halakhic matters pertaining to slaves posed a problem, intelligent authorities had come to the Americas who were capable of raising or addressing them. If rabbis voiced their own concerns, we have few records of it. We see that the parnasim of Curaçao ordered community members to stop letting slaves slaughter fowl without supervision, though perhaps this was done at the behest of newly arrived Rabbi Jossiao Pardo. There are, then, to my knowledge, extremely few rabbinic (sociologically speaking) interventions from the colonies themselves regarding behavior vis-à-vis slaves. That Curacaoan Jews made arrangements with their slaves about working on Shabbat evinces a certain concern for halakhic propriety, whatever one's opinion of the legitimacy of the mechanism. Another such rabbinic declaration is the formerly mentioned citation by Rabbi Gabay Yzidro of the sanctioned nature of the perpetual enslavement of Blacks. Gabay Yzidro's text, a private document unpublished during his lifetime, may reflect the reason for the lack of rabbinic action on or opposition to industrial slavery in the Americas: It existed neither in Europe nor in the Americas, although the distance between Meldola and Gabay Yzidro again points to differences between metropole and colony on the issue of slaves. Rabbinic authorities saw no halakhic problem with industrial plantation slavery per se, moral displeasure at the hubristic luxuries of slave owning notwithstanding. Meldola's responsa from Amsterdam may pertain to a colony in the Americas. If so, it may reflect, as did the various ascamot discussed earlier, a tacit recognition that this new form of slavery existed beyond the purview of halakhic regulation. Gabay Yzidro, writing from the colonial field, wielded a halakha that only reinforced the racial construction of the slave economy and culture.

All of this is not to condemn Jews unduly. As in the Christian world, when it came to industrial slavery, religious law yielded to the dictates of the marketplace. The precarious situation of Jews as barely-tolerated outsiders brooked little room for antiestablishment abolitionist or even ameliorationist sentiments, had it existed. Furthermore, the surrounding society in the Dutch and English colonies hardly favored such "radical" notions. (I will cover this matter in the next chapter.)

The not-surprising conclusion is that the distance maintained by Sephardim in the Caribbean between their religion and their slaves derived from anti-Black sentiments and societal objective correlatives – near-exclusive reliance on Black and colored labor, social, cultural and economic exclusion of

non-Whites – both in the Christian Americas and in Sephardic Amsterdam. I have not come across any explicit communication between the Amsterdam leadership and any of the colonial congregations regarding slave policy, but there can be no doubt that the written and unwritten slave policies of the Caribbean communities followed those of Amsterdam in letter and in spirit. As did Christian attitudes, Sephardic attitudes hardened over time with the mushrooming of a mostly African, often hostile, slave population.

As in Amsterdam, the issue pertained not to halakhic worries but to anti-Black attitudes developed out of the slave economy. The de facto halakhic decision making of the parnasim there and in the colonies adjusted halakha to fit current sociological realities. This is made clear by various communal ordinances regarding non-Whites. A 1702 statute from the community of Curaçao barred all "women other than the Brides of the Law or of a Marriage, together with their bridesmaids," from sitting "in the front part of the ladies' gallery" of the synagogue.²²⁰ This effectively excluded colored female domestic servants, and echoed a similar statute from mid-seventeenth-century Amsterdam. The ascamot of Surinam's Sephardic community regarding colored Jews also partook of the general colonial jurisprudence regarding non-Whites with a residue of halakhic language. Here, as in Amsterdam, a group of colored Jews arose and became large enough to cause community leaders discomfort. The language of the ascamot followed closely that of Amsterdam, to whose practice the ascamot alluded. Already in 1665, the leadership had decided to demote the status of *yahidim* (*Yahidim* = full members) who married a mulatta.²²¹ In the 1734 ascamot it was stipulated that Mulatto Jews in Jodensavanne "may not have any *Mitsva's* on Holiday or Sabbath days, but only on *Rosh Chodesh* [= the New Moon] and the minor fasts and are also required to sit behind the *Theba* [= the central table whence prayers were led and the Torah read]."²²² These non-halakhic mechanisms relegated non-White Jews to receiving honors only on lesser, and more poorly attended, holidays and to sitting only in undesirable seats. The following ordinance appeared in the 1754 community ascamot, translated here by Robert Cohen: "[S]ince experience has taught how prejudicial and improper it would be to admit Mulattos as *Yahidim* [full], and noting that some of these have concerned themselves in matters of the government of the community, it is resolved that henceforth they will never be considered or admitted as *Yahidim* and will solely be *Congreganten*, as in other communities."²²³ The formerly acceptable participation of non-White Jews in the self-organization of the community had clearly become intolerable to the parnasim by this time. In 1772, a resolution of the Ashkenazic community, which enacted similar anticolored legislation, defined White members explicitly as those who were *yahidim*.²²⁴

Further racial restrictions obtained in the 1754 regulations. Members who married a mulatto woman, "either according to our Holy Law or solely in

front of the Magistrates," would have their children considered mulattos by the community as punishment. Mulatto Jews had to sit at the bench of mourners, located at the synagogue's margin. They could not receive certain public blessings (*misheberah*). No woman who was Black, mulatto, or Indian could enter the prayer hall, not even to tend to her master's children, "considering the Respect of the Holy Place."²²⁵ Similarly, the Curaçao congregation Mikve Israel passed an ordinance, in 1751, "not to bring into the synagogue Black or mulatto women in order not to remove the devotion which there needs to be."²²⁶ This happened to be in the wake of a 1750 slave uprising, but a specific connection need not exist. According to a 1753 document, the Jodensavanne synagogue in Surinam possessed a separate door for Blacks (*Porta dos Negros*), of unclear origin or location, though its function can be guessed.²²⁷ Since non-White women had been forbidden entry, this must have served for non-White Jewish men.

The halakhic framework for some of the specific terms that were legislated can easily be identified. Beginning in 1665, the offspring of relationships with mulattas were to be considered mulatto until the third generation, who then could reenter the congregation as yahidim if they were "legitimately born from a marriage with a white."²²⁸ This stipulation clearly echoed the halakhic system of accepting into the community the third-generation offspring of Egyptian and Edomite converts based on Deuteronomy 23:8-9. Similarly, the statement in the askamot that these mulattos could not become yahidim "by learning the Jewish laws and customs" derived from Rabbinic precedent.²²⁹ Other cases show the continued application of halakhic categories to new colonial social realities. In Curaçao, a 1754 decision of the parnasim forbade lending money at interest to slaves and Whites, but stated that Jewish law permitted taking interest from free Blacks.²³⁰ The logic of this unprecedented formulation admits of several pedigrees. Common sense dictated that slaves were not in a position to cover extra payments. In addition, a slave's master might be Jewish, and since whatever the slave owned halakhically belonged to the owner, if one lent to the slave at interest one would have transgressed the commandment to refrain from asking interest from a fellow Jew. Yet while even White non-Jews merited the suspension of the taking of interest according to this pronouncement, based on either general social pragmatism or in response to actual unpleasant incidents,²³¹ Black non-Jews, once out of the condition of slavery, remained available for monetary exploitation. Since no precedent existed for halakhically discriminating against former slaves, what distinguished them in this Curaçaoan Sephardic ordinance from non-Jewish Whites must have inhered in their skin color.

The 1759 founding in Surinam of the colored society or Siva (i.e., yeshiva), *Darhe Jesarim* (= Path of the Upright), must have been a direct response to the various restrictions just mentioned.²³² Founded with the help of

some Portuguese and German Jews, a separate congregation obviously appeared to be desirable to some White Jews as well. Indeed, it was the parnasim who in 1779 publicized from the Jodensavanne synagogue a call to all mulatto and colored Jews and invited all interested persons to become a *congregant* of a group — Oudschans Dentz called it a "godshuis" — to be established in Paramaribo, and these "supporters" were joined by Christians in helping the colored congregation finance the building of a synagogue in Paramaribo.²³³ The Sephardic leadership essentially wished to segregate the increasingly visible colored Jews out of view, out of the ritual orbit of the White Sephardim. At this separate meeting house, they could take up the full membership rank of *yahidim* denied them at Jodensavanne. Yet *Darhe Jesarim* was not supposed to function as a religious community. Only in 1793 did *Darhe Jesarim* even request permission to hold religious services from the colonial authorities, much to the dismay of the parnasim.²³⁴ David Nassy, secretary of the Mahamad in 1791, did his best to ensure that *Darhe Jesarim* would in fact remain merely a "society" and not a "separate religious entity."²³⁵

Other attempts to regulate the colored *congreganten* followed. Further exclusive legislation came in the 1787 askamot. The following year a list of mulatto congreganten and other Jewish mulattos belonging to the community was drawn up.²³⁶ According to Robert Cohen's deft retelling, in the 1790s the Sephardic leadership sought to terminate the functioning of *Darhe Jesarim*. The colored members turned in response to the colonial authorities but were rebuffed. The parnasim ensured that the authorities heard the Sephardic leadership's vociferous objections. The prayer house of *Darhe Jesarim* faced a mysterious end: In 1800, the colored synagogue "was demolished."²³⁷ By the 1820s the problem of colored Jews had been consciously dissipated by the community: "All children from Jewish fathers and housekeepers 'are always raised in one of the other communities, outside Judaism.'" ²³⁸ Fred. Oudschans Dentz wrote that by 1830 there were only fifty colored Jews in Surinam.²³⁹

The still quite fragmentary story of the religious lives of the slaves of colonial Sephardim in general and of non-White Jews in particular is perforce one of contrary momentums of attraction and repulsion. A low level of familiarity with Jewish practices seems to have been attained by at least some slaves. On some levels colored Jews in Surinam were allowed to join the community, especially initially. The Sephardic community of Curaçao, on the other hand, never allowed them even a minimum of entrée. Still, in general, lighter-colored slaves and former slaves shared family ties, received economic support, participated in restricted ways in the religious life, and often worked alongside their Jewish owners after manumission. But ultimately, they posed an embarrassment to the Sephardic Jews in whose communities they (had) served. Consequently, they were denied equality as community members, as people.

Into the Enlightenment

Jews and Blacks in the Long Eighteenth Century

By the era of the Enlightenment and the height of colonialism, Jewish attitudes toward Blacks had taken on a more commonplace manner. Only in the European colonies or under their direct influence did Jewish discourse approach the concrete familiarity of Christian discourse vis-à-vis Blacks. Otherwise, little transformation can be found in the content of Jewish statements about Blacks. By the eighteenth century, European Jewish discourse appeared somewhat more familiar with life and events around the Atlantic. Such increased familiarity can be found in discourse already in the early Enlightenment, as it has been called, and appears to be the case in its Jewish as well as non-Jewish manifestations. One should not be misled by the rise of Enlightenment culture to assume that Jewish discourse presented any kind of homogeneous phenomenon; Jewish communities from northwest Europe to the Americas represented in many ways a different world from their counterparts in North Africa and the Mediterranean. However, one noticeable change in the eighteenth century is the increased circulation of discourse regarding Blacks among Ashkenazic authors, a phenomenon probably traceable to the spread of the Atlantic world's racial discourse. Yet even so, these Ashkenazic authors usually merely borrowed, without creative emendation, rabbinic discourse of the past.

By 1700, an artificial chronological boundary, almost every European colony in the Americas was dependent on Black slavery. From this social, economic, and political vantage point, that year marks no boundary whatsoever. From the perspective of intellectual, cultural, and political history as well, the transition from skepticism to early Enlightenment to Enlightenment proper, from theocentric discourses to more secular and democratic sociopolitical formations, comprises a series of increments perhaps visible only from a distance. For much of Europe, other than its colonial slaves, the year 1800 suggested an utterly different world from that of a hundred years earlier.

The search for systematicity and material, rather than divine, causes had already led to new, "scientific" methods of understanding Blackness and of governing Blacks. No doubt in order to address some of the lingering questions about the origins and nature of Black skin, a Frenchman, M. Littré, dissected the cadaver of a Black in 1702.¹ In 1725, an essay in the *Journal des Sçavans* reported the results of examinations on the skin of Blacks conducted by the famous microscopists Antonie van Leeuwenhoek (1632-1723) and Marcello Malpighi (1628-1694), possibly indicating "that the blacks are men essentially different . . . at least in skin."² In the 1730s, the Academy of Bordeaux, which boasted Montesquieu as a member, sponsored "an inquiry into the reasons for the Negro's physical characteristics."³ Such scientific endeavors aided the continued production of sociological knowledge regarding human speciation. A botanical investigator, Richard Bradley, asserted in 1721 the existence of "five Sorts of Men," where "the *White Men* . . . are *Europeans*."⁴ The new physical and metaphysical sciences only gradually affected the low social and occupational status to which Blacks continued to be condemned, as any reader of the greatest Enlightenment philosophers' opinions regarding Blacks can attest.⁵ In fact, the new sciences provided for a double movement of contraries: On the one hand, the new sciences merely provided updated "rational" explanations for the inferior status of Blacks, if not an articulated racial system; on the other hand, they provided one of the bases for the revolutionary notions admitting Blacks, Jews, and others, however grudgingly and imperfectly, into the fellowship of human beings and citizens. Regarding Blacks, this second vector remained barely tangible to anyone other than theoreticians, the French Revolution and its Saint-Domingue imitation notwithstanding.

MIMICRY WITHIN THE LEISURED CLASSES

Elites of the eighteenth century ruled through a social power contingent on the ostentatious and wasteful display of wealth. Jews at the pinnacle could live to the fullest the life of the urban bourgeoisie, landed aristocracy, or its colonial imitation, the planter, according to the seemingly universal standards of their class. Abraham Gradis, one of the wealthiest of Bordeaux's eighteenth-century Sephardic Jews, ran his family's international shipping concern, which after 1722 concerned itself exclusively with the colonial trade, exporting wine, alcohol, flour, and salt beef to the colonies, while importing sugar and indigo. Although he never set foot personally in the European colonies, he impressed visitors to his estate, perhaps even after his firm's collapse in 1762, with his magnificent garden, complete with a "large pool of water filled with fish, . . . flowers and trees



FIGURE 6. Jeremias Wachsmuth and Martin Engelbrecht, *Jewish Meal at the Festival of Tabernacles*, colored engraving, Augsburg, circa 1750. Collection of the Joods Historisch Museum, Amsterdam, inventory no. 00635. Printed by permission of the museum.

White maidservant (the only female figure not wearing modest dress but a low-cut bodice revealing the cleavage of her breasts), and yet a third White manservant – so that no fewer than three servants rush out of the corners carrying plates of steaming-hot food to the upper-class Jews. Some of the latter are dressed in “traditional” garb and others in up-to-date wigs and tricornered hats, a sign along with the Black domestics of the dangerous infiltration and miscegenation Jews were seen as introducing into Europe.¹⁶ One of the plates from William Hogarth’s series of satirical engravings, *A Harlot’s Progress*, portrayed antiheroine prostitute Moll Hackabout “acquiring [a Black] boy and a pet monkey at the expense of her Jewish protector.”¹⁷ A late (?) eighteenth-century satirical engraving of a wealthy English Jewish couple shows them attended by a woman servant and the requisite little Black boy and pet dog. Especially in the latter items, the iconography tallies precisely with the many depictions of English elites with their pet dogs and pet Black boys. Unlike the Jewish couple depicted, the maidservant and Black boy both look directly at the viewer,

perhaps to evoke sympathy for their servitude under Jews. This, too, would fit with late-eighteenth-century English iconographic uses of Blacks.¹⁸

The fact of servants/slaves in the homes of European Jews led to the production in Jewish discourse of a genre similar to one found in most Western European nations, advice on managing servants.¹⁹ Instructions to householders combined guidance regarding the moral dangers introduced by servants into the home with advice on administering a household and the proper management of domestic staff. Though never as bent on luxury, Jewish textual equivalents differed from their Christian counterparts only in their constant reiteration of halakhic concerns.²⁰

Pragmatic issues aside, the question of whether or not a Jew should possess a non-Jewish slave or use a non-Jewish servant vexed European Jewish thinkers and leaders. Jewish readers and synagogue-goers in Western Europe found themselves repeatedly warned against what some considered halakhically permissible. Rabbi Abraham David de Leon, head of the *yeshiva* in Bayonne, France, complained in his 1765 sermon for Shabbat Teshuvah, the Sabbath of Repentance that falls during the High Holy Days, about how “we abandon our foods to the power of *goyot* [non-Jewish women],” by which he meant the women who served in Jewish homes.²¹ When in 1778 Rabbi David Meldola of The Hague told a visiting rabbi a hagiographic account of the earlier Amsterdam rabbi Ishac Aboab da Fonseca (1605–1693), the only sin of the Amsterdam *parnasim* to be specified was that of “the first Parnass”: that “he has two gentile women in his house and people suspect him and he should send them away.”²² Showing a keen awareness of some of the various psychological, religious, and political problems generated by the entry of a non-Jew into a Jewish household, Rabbi Shlomo b. Mas’oud Adhan exhorted readers in a book of “laws and morals and reproofs and warnings, confessions and conduct”:

[A]nd beware my brother, friend of my soul, lest you bring any non-Jew into your house to be your servant and to serve the people of your house, but rather from your brothers, from your poor [should you take servants], as it says: “and your brother becomes impoverished,” etc. (Lev. 25:47), but [beware] if in any case you bring in a non-Jew to serve you in your house, lest he become jealous of you and take your soul²³ or steal your possessions or exalt himself over you and turn you over to the ruler or feed you something forbidden; that is to say, or he will become jealous for your wife [and desire her] or for your sons and daughters, God forbid.²⁴

Given the tenuous position of Jews amidst a non-Jewish majority, a non-Jewish servant was seen to pose a serious risk within a Jewish home. The Jews’ slippery condition derived both from external threats and internal erosion, and Adhan’s text thematizes their relation to each other as well as the degree to which the non-Jewish servant brought the dual danger into the Jewish home. Even the

wrong kind of Jewish servants might bring in unwanted evils. The Ashkenazic community of Altona issued an ordinance in 1676 barring community members from hiring a "tutor (*melamed*) or manservant or maidservant who was a heretic (*kofer*) or has any kind of bad reputation. And no one may hire a woman who has had intercourse with a man, or a divorced woman (*aguna*)."²⁵ Exhortations of this kind recurred for good reasons.

It is difficult to determine the exact referent of Adhan's theological rhetoric, whether he had continental servants or colonial slaves in mind. What is clear is that Jewish slave owners became dependent on the labor of their slaves, problematically so for many rabbis. Others took a different approach to the issue. In his guide to the 613 *mitsvot*, Rabbi Binyamin Rafael Dias Brandon (d. before 1753) understood Leviticus 25:46 as a positive commandment to work Canaanite slaves forever, that is, not to free them. This in itself was hardly new, but Dias Brandon's explication surprisingly reversed the Jewish Enlightenment desire to escape what was seen as the unproductive, disembodied existence of urban European Jewry. Dias Brandon, possibly citing Athias (cited in Chapter 2), wrote:

If you open the eyes of your intelligence you will know that the mercies of God, may He be Blessed, for his people are numerous and therefore because he brought them near to his worship/service he wanted that our slaves be the Canaanites, in order that they should suffer on their shoulders the toil and the trouble in matters of the body, such as the working of the land and weaving and the remaining tasks necessary for the upkeep of the world. But the children of Israel will not cease day or night from meditating on God's Torah and his commandments, as they have no need to do any physical chores. And for this Israel was commanded that Canaanite slaves do not gain worldly freedom but rather [forever] remain our slaves so that we will be able to engage in Torah to attain the eternal life of rest.²⁶

Whether or not Dias Brandon ever lived in the Caribbean or had any connections with the Brandons in Surinam or Barbados I cannot say.²⁷ His words here, however, naturalized the social presumption operative so particularly in the Atlantic world, Sephardic or otherwise. In eighteenth-century rhetoric, the laboring classes, including slaves, were often reified as a distinct, unassimilable Other, as in 1736 when the English aristocratic Tory Bolingbroke wrote that the "herd of mankind" comprised "another species, . . . scarce members of the community, though born in the country, . . . marked out like the Jews, a distinct race, hewers of wood and drawers of water."²⁸ Dias Brandon took up this vocabulary, which had not yet become the assimilationist desire for Jewish "modernization" so frequently expressed by Enlightenment thinkers and policy makers – that the parasitical Jews created by Christian history needed to become productive citizens – to emphasize the importance of Jewish nobility,

otherworldliness, and liberty from the curse of menial labor. Not coincidentally, by the end of the seventeenth century, much of the older Sephardic elite involved in the Caribbean trade "had by and large retired from commerce and devoted itself to the management of its investments and the pleasures of a life of leisure."²⁹ It is difficult to determine whether Dias Brandon's words alluded or referred to the Black slavery of the Atlantic. The terms chosen for the world to come, "the life of the world of rest," come from traditional sources, but they seem ironic given that a life freed from physical labor would stand already as at least a partial achievement of just such a life of rest.³⁰ The same emphasis on rest, likewise hovering between the spiritual and the mundane, emerges in the Surinamese Sephardic plantation named "Descanço."³¹

SOCIAL INTIMACY AND SOCIAL DEATH

Most Sephardic communities in the Americas conformed to the same pattern. A smaller or greater number of merchants and their families clustered in a port city, with a very few Jews engaging in plantation agriculture around the peripheries. Curaçao constituted the largest of the communities along this model, while Surinam, especially Jodensavanne, existed as the only extensive plantation agriculture society to arise within a Jewish sphere. These two Jewish communities shone as the twin centers of the numerically and culturally dim American-Jewish world; to whatever degree this world succeeded, its success paraded itself in Curaçao and Surinam.

As among their non-Jewish colonial counterparts, slaves and slavery permeated the lives of these Jewish communities in myriad ways. Physically, commercially, sexually, and socially, slaves and owners shared, however unequally, the same world, expressing differing kinds of loyalty and enmity toward one another, with feelings contingent on matters momentary or festering. Jews and Blacks found themselves arrayed against one another as master and slave, as merchant and consumer, and later in the eighteenth century as competitors in small-scale rural retailing and low-level governmental posts. In the mass-production agricultural world of the plantations, where economic policy dictated a high quantity of cheaply fed slaves worked like animals, relations reached the greatest heights of hostility and violence, systemic and episodic.

Even as slaves, Blacks lived within the world of their owners. Sexual relations between masters and slaves, which no doubt ranged from voluntary to coerced on the part of the slave women, often led to continued social and at times legal connections between the two parties and their offspring.³² In Curaçao and Surinam, where slavery was more an affair of the collective community, the enforced intimacy between slaves and masters was especially high. The plantations owned by Jews in both of these colonies mostly sat clustered together,

often contiguous with one another's lands. It seems that the Portuguese Jewish community in Surinam exercised authority over the slaves of its members with a high degree of autonomy. From the time of the general edict regarding slaves of May 1698, for instance, permission for drumming and dancing in the streets by slaves needed to be obtained from the governor. But a decree of 1711 stated that if slaves wanted to celebrate publicly in Jodensavanne, they would need the approval of the Jewish authorities there.³³ Yet these plantation grounds and communal sites belonged as much to the slaves as to the owners. The slaves of Curacaoan Jews (and Christians) "did not hesitate to clamber over the walls" of the Sephardic cemetery "to pick the fruit off the trees."³⁴ According to oral traditions of the Saramaka Maroons, "the slave crews of the Jewish plantations in [the] upper Suriname River region were routinely mixed in large harvesting gangs," attesting to one of the ways the communalism of the masters created and overlapped with a parallel communalism among the slaves.³⁵ Slaves in both Surinam and Curaçao "partly borrowed" the Portuguese spoken by their Jewish owners.³⁶ Slaves belonging to individual Jews were often donated for community endeavors. The slaves in Curaçao were sent by their Jewish owners to help build the synagogue in 1732.³⁷ Decisions involving slaves became communal matters in places like Surinam. When in 1772 Ishak Nassy was to send his boss carpenter and Black carpenters away from Jodensavanne on a job, complaints arose from other parnasim, who advocated a writing campaign to Mr. Nassy. He was urged to delay sending the carpenters until eight days after Passover, as they were then busy with their (holiday-related?) work among the Jodensavanne population.³⁸ Perhaps most significantly, at least in early Sephardic Surinam, as mentioned in the 1754 Jodensavanne *ascamot*, "some [mulattos] have concerned themselves in matters of the government of the community."³⁹

In Surinam, the communal mastery over certain slaves emerges in the branding of slaves belonging to the *sedaca* fund with the mark "B:V:S:", standing for the name of the congregation, *Beraha ve-Salom* (Blessing and Peace).⁴⁰ The practice of branding was hardly unique to Jews. Already from 1684, colonial regulations were forcing all owners to brand their slaves with the former's initials in an effort to aid the maintenance of order.⁴¹ I have seen no record that this branding generated any halakhic issue. Perhaps it was thought that as non-Jews the slaves were not forbidden to make permanent markings on their bodies as were Jews (Lev. 19:28).

Not only planters and slave owners, then, but all of the members of the Jewish community in Surinam benefited from the coerced labor of slaves. The relative wealth of the Sephardic community in Surinam is immediately seen in this luxurious form of self-service, compared with most European communities, which might be able to afford a single servant and other assorted skilled workers for specific jobs. From the perspective of the slaves, the intensive plantation

slave culture of a colony such as Surinam proved inhospitable in the extreme, whatever the religion of one's master. Richard Price recorded the following oral tales from descendants of slaves who had run away from plantations belonging to Sephardim:

Lanu's wife — I don't know if she was a girlfriend or a real wife — worked in the white man's house. Once she gave her husband a drink of water. ([whispering:] But they tell me it was really sugar-cane juice, because that was the "water" the white man normally drank.) Well, they saw that and said, "The woman gave Lanu sugar cane juice!" and they whipped her. They beat the woman until she was dead. Then they carried her to him and said, "Look at your wife here." Then they whipped Lanu until he lost consciousness, and they left him lying on the ground. Then, the spirit of his wife came into his head, and he arose suddenly and ran into the forest. The white man, seeing this, said, "Lanu's gone!" But his men said, "He won't live; he's as good as dead already."

Ayako had a sister [Seei] on the same plantation. One day she was at work, with her infant son tied to her back. The child began crying, but the white man didn't want her to sit down to nurse it. But it kept on crying. She kept working. The child kept crying. Then the white man called her. "Bring the child over here and I'll hold it for you." So she took the child off her back, handed it to him, and returned to work. He grasped the child upside down by the legs and lowered its head into a bucket of water until he saw that it was dead. Then he called the woman and said, "Come take the child and tie it on your back." So she did so. She returned to work until evening, when they released the slaves from work. . . . Well, Ayako saw this and said, "What sadness! My family is finished. My sister has only one child left, and when she goes to work tomorrow, if the child cries, the white man will do the same thing again." . . . Then he prepared himself until he was completely set. And he escaped. He ran off with his sister and her baby daughter [Yaya].⁴²

Waterland, the plantation from which Lanu and Ayako fled, was owned and managed by a Sephardic Jew named Imanuël Machado.

Slaves necessarily got caught up in their owners' family affairs, daily happenings, arguments, romances. In Curaçao, a Sephardic master, like his Protestant counterparts, often appointed one of his "mature female slaves" to care for his children as their *yaya* (the equivalent of "mammy").⁴³ When religious and ethnic tensions between Dutch Calvinists and Jews in Dutch Brazil became explosive, Governor van Nassau, in order to calm the antagonisms, had an edict made public that no one should "continue injuring, besides by words or actions, another person of another religion, 'Nation' or condition, or cause injury through his Black slaves, or give occasion for this, under penalty."⁴⁴ Despite the veiled nature of the reference to just what the slaves were doing for

their Calvinist or Jewish masters, they clearly served, willingly or not, as foot soldiers or messengers of their masters' hostility, regardless of whether they shared it. According to the ascamot of Congregation Beraha ve-Salom in Jodensavanne, neither Blacks nor Whites who were infected by a contagious disease, rampant in the colonized tropics, had permission to enter the synagogue or its environs.⁴⁵ In February 1776, Is. Naar Mesa of Jodensavanne threatened Ribca Mendes Vais, approaching her inappropriately and entering her house forcibly, without permission. His abuse seems to have included her slaves as well, who thus became secondary victims of their mistress's attacker.⁴⁶ Legal decisions aimed at Jews affected their slaves as well, as when in 1767 the slaves of Surinamese Jews living outside Paramaribo were not allowed to come to town.⁴⁷

The intimate living situations of slaves and masters meant that masters became caught up in the lives, culture, and characters of their underlings. The children raised mostly by a Black slave woman inevitably inherited bits of her African-based culture, through vehicles such as Anansi stories, humor, music, or underclass insights.⁴⁸ A 1777 letter from an Ashkenazic merchant living in Reading, Pennsylvania, where he ran a country store, attests to some of the vicissitudes of such situations. Writing to a Jewish associate in Philadelphia, he related his recent slave troubles:

I also inform you that I may again sell my nigger wench at a profit. So if a ship with niggers should arrive, or a ship with [indentured] Germans, you will let me know, because I cannot manage without a servant. The wench I now have has two virtues, both bad ones. First, she is drunk all day, when she can get it, and second, she is mean, so that my wife cannot say a word to her. She is afraid of her. How did all this happen? A free nigger here wants to court her and to buy her from me. I don't want to give her away for less than 110 pounds, with her bastard, because I bought the bastard too. At present she costs me 90 pounds. So if I can work things out over her, I think it is best to let her go and get another. So if you should have occasion to hear of a good nigger wench, or of a good servant, you will inform me.⁴⁹

As owners of the labor time of these slaves, masters necessarily concerned themselves with situations interfering with their belongings' work capacity. For some unknown reason, in 1771, Purim, a slave of the widow of Abraham Mendes Vais of Jodensavanne, killed a Black slave belonging to and serving the communal sedaca fund. The parnasim worried that word would spread to the other Blacks.⁵⁰ The next year, 1772, a rumor circulated that a slave belonging to Isahak de Joseph Cohen Nassy had poisoned some of the other slaves. According to Herbert I. Bloom, this situation precipitated a crisis that led to the owner's neglect of the plantation and his forced sale of it in 1773.⁵¹ Along other lines, Sephardic plantation owners provided manioc fields for their slaves, a practice

that had been required by the Dutch in Brazil and that was known in the Caribbean as a Brazilian custom.⁵²

Despite the personal intimacies, coerced or otherwise, that emerged from and determined every specific master-slave relationship, the depersonalization that Orlando Patterson connected with enslavement as a system can be seen in a number of ways. For one thing, although the wills of many Jews from Barbados mentioned their slaves by name (regardless of what they intended for them), others listed them simply as "slaves" or "Negroes." In Surinam, such namelessness recurs throughout the internal records of the Jodensavanne communal board: "The Blacks" of so-and-so should be rented out, "two Blacks" should be purchased in Amsterdam, or a couple possesses "two houses in Paramaribo, slaves &c." The 1708 New York will of merchant Joseph Bueno de Mesquita recorded his bequest to his loving wife Rachell of "all the slaves now belonging to me."⁵³ Advertisements placed in the late eighteenth century by Jamaican Jewish masters searching for runaway slaves differed not at all in terminology from those placed by Christian masters.⁵⁴ This is the ground on which all social interactions occurred, whether they confirmed it or challenged its limits. Exceptions prove the rule. In 1764, Abraham de Aguilar and his wife Ester Mendes Quiras, of Surinam, registered an official protest against an attempt to rid them of their property. In this context of self-defense, some of their human property became "their best slaves."⁵⁵

Not surprisingly, social interaction frequently took on the depersonalized aspects to be expected in a colonial slave system. In May 1776, Jacob Pinto and Samuel Bishop appraised some Connecticut land whose ownership was about to be transferred, "in payment for a negro."⁵⁶ In order to provide a tombstone for the grave of a Curacaoan Sephardi whose wife had never been able to do so, the parnasim there sold the single slave belonging to the wife after her own death in 1759 to pay for the importation of two stones for the couple, probably from Amsterdam, whence most derived.⁵⁷ There were those who became extremely caught up in the maintenance of their way of life. In 1703, Surinamese Rabbi Jahacob Casseres produced a log explaining his many absences from communal prayers and his teaching duties at the Jodensavanne yeshiva. On a handful of occasions, it seems, he forsook his pastoral responsibilities in order to attend auctions of Black slaves.⁵⁸

Concomitant with the transdenominational aspirations of Europeans under the sign of colonialism, Sephardic and Ashkenazic Jews spoke of Blacks in the tone of Whites, when they noticed them at all. Mentions of Blacks not relating to their being merchandise were extremely rare other than in wills. Aaron Lopez's nephew, describing the capture of the British garrison at Beaufort by the American revolutionaries in a letter to his uncle, wrote at one point merely that "they have taken prisoners 700 British with 200 Tories & negroes, &

dispersed the rest through the woods."⁵⁹ More typical were mentions of personal commercial or legal interest. In a 1684 letter to Amsterdam, the young Curacaoan resident David Levi Dovals outlined the help a friend promised him in obtaining Dovals's parents' "houses & Blacks & plantation & 500 pesos in investments in the [Jewel-trading] company [of his relative Manuel Levy Duarte?]."⁶⁰ A 1762 letter from Isaac da Costa and his Christian partner Farr in Charleston, South Carolina, to Newport merchant Aaron Lopez noted drily that "New Negroes sells [*sic*] very high & much wanted."⁶¹ The Ashkenazic Philadelphia merchant Michael Gratz, originally from Silesia, corresponding in the 1760s with his associate M[e]yer Josephson, wrote in passing about the latter's failure to "surrender the nigger in Philadelphia."⁶² The letter, written in Yiddish, uses "ניגער / Neger" instead of the more usual Yiddish term "שוורצע / Schwartz." Gratz, that is, had adopted the common non-Jewish epithet for Blacks. When a controversial person died in Barbados in 1792, the *parnasim* allowed her to be buried in a newly created separate section of the cemetery: "and if they [her family?] will bring negroes to dig her grave they are at liberty to do so."⁶³

Given the socioeconomic structure in which Blacks were used, it should come as no surprise that their identity garnered little esteem. When, in January 1775, Mosseh C. Nassy exploded in anger at Ishak Naar Meza and the Sephardic *parnasim* in Surinam, one of the provocative insults he flung was that "they have as much conscience as a Black."⁶⁴ This epithet produced the intended shock, as it was repeated verbatim by the several witnesses and duly entered in the minutes recording Nassy's being called to account the next day and sentenced to punishment.⁶⁵ Two months later, when one of the witnesses, Josseph de la Parra, deposed concerning the incident under oath, the entire interchange was recited and the particularly offending statement sharpened: "... & Naar responded, 'What conscience?'; [Nassy retorted:] 'the conscience of new Blacks,'" that is, newly imported, still thoroughly African.⁶⁶ Nassy might have had in mind something similar to what the authors of the *Encyclopedia Britannica* (3d ed., Edinburgh, 1792) meant in asserting that the notorious vices of West Africans were said "to have extinguished [in them] the principles of natural law, and to have silenced the reproofs of conscience."⁶⁷ That was the end of the exchange, reported Parra. The depths of offense contained in this sentence marked the climax of the confrontation both syntactically and semantically.

Very few expressions of recognition of the humanity of Blacks surfaced in colonial Jewish discourse. Explicit calls for humane treatment remained almost nonexistent, found in a will here or there. Still, despite the fact that slavery served as the nexus in which, overwhelmingly, Jews and Blacks met one another, it should not be imagined that this nexus constituted a monolithic entity. In the colonial world, where fewer Christian Whites could be found than desired, Jews

and Blacks were often given permission to fight in the militias, often alongside one another. When the French attacked Jamaica near Port Royal in 1694, of the hundred English dead, "most of these were *Jews* and *Negroes*," giving some indication that members of both groups contributed troops to the front lines.⁶⁸ Particular Jewish benevolence toward Blacks was not entirely absent. Sephardic and other physicians at St. Thomas established a hospital for Africans who had become ill during the Middle Passage. The apparently frequent successful rehabilitation was effected with the help of Blacks experienced in traditional African medicine.⁶⁹

Jews and Blacks often engaged in commerce together. This is reported by many writers, both positively and negatively, on both local and transnational levels.⁷⁰ At the end of the seventeenth century, Sephardic Jews of Jamaica told Spanish visitor Gregorio de Robles that they traded "with the Indians, mulattos and mestizos."⁷¹ Sephardim of eighteenth-century Curaçao frequently traded with free colored people of Saint-Domingue.⁷² Blacks and Jews sometimes competed for the same socioeconomic niches. Jewish small traders in Surinam, for example, faced "keen competition from many Christian women who engaged in petty retailing and employed their Negro slaves for that purpose."⁷³ On the other hand, in the late eighteenth century, free colored people on occasion resorted to Jewish models in pressing for rights.⁷⁴ Sometimes it was also possible for Blacks to attain a *de facto* situation more favorable than that of their supposedly social betters. When a "Jewish shop-keeper in Kingston, Jamaica, boxed the ear of a Gentile-owned Negro who had been impudent to him, the slave's master, a member of the House of the Assembly, compelled the Jew to appear before that august body and beg forgiveness on his knees for the wrong he had committed."⁷⁵

BLACKS AND SLAVES IN EUROPEAN JEWISH DISCOURSE

One finds in the Jewish discourse of the period a range of familiarity regarding the far-flung outposts of Europe, although there is nothing approaching the specificity, intimacy, continuity, and reciprocity manifested by non-Jewish discourse flowing out of metropolitan administrative centers, between kindred populations in Europe and colony, and from colonial elites.⁷⁶ The expanding difference between the segments of Jewish society increasingly assimilated to the general culture and the more isolationist rabbinic realms could be measured as well in knowledge of Europe's overseas reality. Rabbinic genres tended to evince far less awareness of this distant world, while the discourse of those Jews seeking to enter the mainstream of European society concerned itself more with such things. R. Abraham de Bargas (dates unknown) moralized toward the middle of the eighteenth century against chasing illusory material gain,

using the mineral-rich Indies as a set piece. Where, he asked, should one search for happiness?

To the Indies, where there are mines of gold? Is the fishing for pearls and diamonds very transitory, contingent and dangerous? yearning and momentary? to the sphere of the profane laurel? It is a confused Babylon for a man to sail searching to the Indies rather than for the most precious gold of the Holy Law of God.⁷⁷

Clearly, the colonies offered Jews the same kinds of possibilities they offered to Christians. By 1712, Mordechai Hamburger, London merchant and son-in-law of Glikl of Hamelin, had fled poverty (and nine children, with a tenth on the way), to "the lands of the sea, the land of East India."⁷⁸ After a decade's absence, Hamburger returned in 1721 to London, "a wealthy nabob, whose jewels formed the daily topic of the English press":⁷⁹

for his arrival created a large noise and to-do, the like of which has not been heard, that a man of years from our cold clime should go by sea a journey of close to a year to that hot clime, and should spend there a long time such as this, and should succeed so much, earning great wealth, and should return home alive with all his vast property, after he came there lacking, . . . and he brought with him a treasure of precious stones, and in particular there was among them one large diamond of great value, the like of which this land possessed not, also he brought with him precious articles of gold, the like of which had not been seen, especially as it had a green detailing. And the great novelty that transpired with this man was printed in the pages of the news which are printed in London every day. And the rumor reached Frankfurt am Main, when I was there.⁸⁰

Ya'akov Emden's description reflects the novelty with which Hamburger's colonial hiatus was seen within certain realms of the Jewish community; after all, the first Jewish merchants from London had arrived in Madras only between 1680 and 1690.⁸¹ Emden's construction emphasized the colonies' environmental distance from the Europe that a Jew like Emden could now think of as "his." That these works from rabbinic authors marveled so over the distance between the colonies and the homeland shows that we have here an example of a rabbinic discourse functioning at a time lag relative to certain other areas of Jewish sociocultural activity. One would have expected "international mercantile Jews" to be long used to travel over such vast expanses.

Related to this discursive heterogeneity regarding the colonies is the difficulty of fixing the status of the slave discourse at work in rabbinic texts, what exactly the referent was in any given discussion of slaves. One traveling Torah scholar described one portion of what was probably a typical meeting among his peers:

Tuesday, the fast-day: after prayers I was taken by R. Joseph de Milhaud to his house where he showed us the Introduction to his tract. . . . Then he went on to say

that neither the RaMBaM nor the RaBaD [R. Abraham b. David of Posquieres] correctly understood the explanation in *Torath Cohanim* [= Midrash Leviticus] [on the verse] "Thou shalt not work him with rigour" (Lev. 25:43): He [the master] should not say to the slave (for example), "Keep digging under this vine until I return" – which the RaMBaM explains as keeping him waiting excessively, and the RaBaD also explains as keeping him waiting excessively; but he [Milhaud] explains: that if the slave is engaged in digging under the vine, he [the master] should not require him to have it finished before he returns (i.e., excessive exertion). And I began to explain to him that the RaMBaM is right and his own explanation was not right.⁸²

This was very likely how a halakhic issue regarding slaves might have arisen, as much part of a dispute among scholars, in this case in Carpentras, an enclave of the Papal States, as living law with administrative functions. The continuity of Hebrew vocabulary often also makes it difficult to determine what the specific referents are behind any given passage. R. David B. Aryeh Leib of Lida, rabbi in Amsterdam during the late seventeenth century, suggested that circumcision served as God's brand mark on his slaves, the Jews, making it impossible for them to flee or deny their master.⁸³ Did this linkage betray a nod toward contemporary slave practice, or did it merely link circumcision metaphorically through traditional midrashic imagery to a perennial, almost proverbial, feature of slavery? The one statement discussing a concrete slave situation comes from R. Ya'akov Huli's *Me'am Lo'ez*. Huli wrote that Yitro recognized the "lowly status of Israel in Egypt, that they were as poor as the slaves in Malta."⁸⁴

The problem of determining the specific domain of statements regarding slaves and slavery is not, of course, unique to Hebrew discourse. In the different context of the revolutionary discourse of eighteenth-century France, some "four out of ten principal usages of the term *esclavage* . . . were purely metaphorical."⁸⁵ Somewhat similarly, Italian playwright Vittorio Alfieri (1749–1803) lambasted publishers as slaves who, "unable to whiten themselves (*imbiancare sé stessi*) were content to dirty or blacken others (*sporciare gli altri*)." Although no racialized slavery existed in Italy at the time, the language of moral and physical color continued to serve clear polemical purposes, as will be seen now with regard to European Jewish discourse.⁸⁶

I turn first to discourse in Hebrew stemming mostly from rabbinic circles, although I do not want to make the distinction between sectors of Jewish discourse overly artificial, especially since some rabbis also wrote works in Spanish and English and were quite cosmopolitan in their own right. Rabbinic minds in Europe – for some of whom, at least toward the century's beginning, distant lands still contained monstrous creatures that may or may not have resembled their human inhabitants – continued to deploy the timeworn truisms of Hebrew discourse. According to the usually scientific Tuvia ha-Cohen, from

Metz, satyrs romped around steeped in licentiousness, with their sexual organs eternally erect. The sages he cited were divided only over whether these satyrs romped in India, beyond the Gihon or Ganges River, or in the extreme parts of the land of Kush.⁸⁷ The few Jewish travel writers or travelers who left reports dispensed overwhelmingly negative depictions so similar to those found in non-Jewish literature that one would not be able to distinguish an author's religious background without knowing his identity, apparently particular Hebraic tropes notwithstanding. Sason Hai Castiel (married in 1703; Istanbul) traveled through Africa, the Persian Gulf area, and India in the first and possibly second decade of the eighteenth century. Trained with a traditional rabbinic education, he left in a manuscript rendering of his journeys this synopsis of Kushites he had seen:

They are all black and have never known cold but only heat, and these are the very children of Ham the father of Kena'an and they all go naked and mate like veritable dogs. Houses they have not but only dugouts under the earth, and they are close to the land of H̄avila and the River Pishon [the Nile] is near them, and there they go along the riverbank and urinate in the river and play like animals.⁸⁸

Castiel mentioned the Hamitic genealogy of the Black Kushites he had seen, implicitly placing this – without explicitly citing a curse – in contiguity with their moral debasement and cultural primitivity. He possibly drew his statement that the Kushites mated like dogs directly from *aggadic* sources.⁸⁹

Some authors marked Blacks with the curse of innate slavery even without mentioning Ham. Avraham Yehezkiyah b. Ya'akov Bassan wrote the commentary appearing within the 1763 compilation of the 613 commandments of Rabbi Abraham Gabay Yzidro cited in Chapter 6.⁹⁰ Where the latter had advanced the view that non-Jewish slaves, termed Kushites, were never to be freed, Bassan explained Gabay Yzidro's choice of terms in his own gloss: "Canaanite slave. These are the slaves from the rest of the nations. And because of the rhyme scheme [Gabay Yzidro changed 'Canaanite' to 'Kushite']. And furthermore, at present most of the slaves are blacks, and moreover certainly and in truth the blacks are slaves."⁹¹ Historical circumstances, that is, have made Blacks slaves, but in any case they are innately, essentially slaves in their character.

Nonetheless, it is difficult to detect much awareness of "actual" Blacks in Jewish discourse beyond the colonies themselves. One Jewish traveler visiting Venice's Plaza San Marco in 1776 commented to his diary: "I entered one of the palaces and saw some of the rooms and the *magistrados*. They say that there are 72 *tribunales* there – and this is something staggering. There is a clock and two black slaves strike it [on the hour]."⁹² As evident here, Blacks remained a curiosity for many Jews immersed in their introspective culture. The nature of Hebrew discourse about Blacks therefore appears remarkably static, changing

somewhat more in adapting to new generic modes than in content. Perhaps it should not be surprising that authors more removed from firsthand experience with Blacks and slavery tended to draw more on stock textual antecedents, or that the shared philosophical canon flattened the available vocabulary.

Eighteenth-century Jewish perceptions of Kushites continued to draw on the negative tropes of earlier discourse. The eighteenth-century Italian rabbi Yitshak Lampronti produced for his age a new encyclopedic dictionary of the talmudic vocabulary and conceptual language, *Paḥad Yitshak* (Venice, 1741–1840).⁹³ In his entry for “Kushite,” Lampronti merely provided a terse discussion of the halakhic issue involved with the blessing to be said on seeing a Black, citing the earlier responsum of Ya’akov b. Shmuel Ḥagiz on the same subject (quoted in Chapter 5).

KUSHITE. On [seeing] a child of a Kushite one need not bless; but on [seeing] white children of Kushites it is possible for one to bless "Blessed is The Good and The One who makes things good"; but on [seeing] one who was born a Kushite to a white father and mother one should bless, in Israel, "our God, King of the world, who varies the creatures."⁹⁴

By the mid-eighteenth century, when the sighting of a Black bespoke something quotidian in the Mediterranean world, Lampronti felt the blessing need not be said, as had Hagiz also a century earlier. Yet the two blessings Lampronti suggested implied a clear axiology: Approaching Whiteness and leaving behind the Blackness of one's parents represented a good, moving toward Blackness, a deviance from the desired norm.⁹⁵ As with so many of the statements regarding Blacks in Jewish texts, only the vaguest of relations can be established with similar statements from non-Jewish discourses. Lampronti made no mention of any of the writers pondering the origin and nature of Black skin or of the scientific discussions of Blacks representing "freaks of nature" – albino Blacks, "mottled" Blacks, Blacks whose color changed – to be found in rationalist circles, particularly in England.⁹⁶

The famous Rabbi Hayyim Yosef David Azulai visited Amsterdam in 1778. He reported in his travel journal that a local rabbi, Aaron ha-Cohen, "had been to America twice and he told me that he had found out that H.M.T. [another rabbi] had bought a *mulatto* [slave] there: she was a *goya* [non-Jewish woman] born from a negress and a white and she became his concubine and bore him a son. Even here in Amsterdam these are shocking tidings."⁹⁷ Azulai and/or his hosts projected such misbehavior as being solely a colonial decadence, though clearly social corruption was not unknown "even . . . in Amsterdam." Perhaps Azulai's hosts feigned shock to enhance a sense of their propriety. Perhaps their historical memory had failed to include the less-than-transcendent aspects of their own past pertaining to interracial sexuality. Perhaps feeling shocked

enabled them to better believe in their own upstanding decorum. Other similar instances of repression occurred around this time. The eighteenth-century Amsterdam Sephardic writer David Franco Mendes busied himself with the writing of a history of the Amsterdam Sephardic community some six years earlier, around 1772. Here, he intriguingly left mulattos out of the list of those excluded by a 1661 resolution "not to admit Italians, Germans [Ashkenazim] nor Poles to the schools but only converts."⁹⁸ Franco Mendes's omission fits in well with the "harmonizing, apologetic" attitude toward the Sephardic experience in Amsterdam (he barely mentioned the poor, for instance), the "desire to smooth away all conflicts" noticeable in the brief biographies of famous figures – Menasseh ben Israel and Mosseh Rafael d'Aguilar, among others – which he contributed to the Jewish Enlightenment journal published out of the German community, *Hameassef*.⁹⁹ Thus, even the sharp and sophisticated Azulai probably wrote unaware of the fact that a century earlier in the same city, similar behavior had sown the seeds for a communal conflict – well, hardly a conflict, more like a strategic, preemptive maneuver on the part of the leadership (the subject of Chapter 8). In any event, it is possible to infer from references in official letters from 1729, 1731, and 1732 to two poor Sephardic women living in Jerusalem to whom charity was being sent from the Amsterdam community – both bearing the infrequently used name Sipora – that the issue of colored offspring might have continued even among Sephardim connected to Amsterdam.¹⁰⁰

Negative evaluations of Blackness continued to receive more expression than positive ones. They also became more prevalent in Ashkenazic discourse than appears to have been the case previously, reflecting the spread of both generalized anti-Black attitudes and Sephardic exegesis into central and eastern Europe. Statements of Mediterranean authors can only with difficulty, if at all, be traced to fluctuations in the importation and presence of Blacks into the local cultures. The various statements about Blacks reflect free-floating, almost proverbial, constructions of diffuse anti-Black sentiment, in contrast to statements to be found in colonial Jewish discourse, which reflected the greater detail of Christian colonial discourse.

In 1744, the prominent translator Rabbi Abraham b. Yitshak Asa (eighteenth century; Istanbul) published a Ladino translation of the Pentateuch along with its Aramaic translations/interpretations. Combining Song of Songs 5:10–11 along midrashic methods, Asa wove the white and ruddy skin and black hair of the beloved into a traditional allegorical figure: "His head: [that is,] His law, which is desired more than pure gold, and an explanation of the words in which there are mountains and mountains of reasons and commandments. To those who observe them, [they are] white as snow and to those who do not observe them, black as a raven's wing."¹⁰¹ Such interpretations continued to overshadow straightforward understandings of biblical passages. Interpreting

Amos 9:7, Shlomo b. Yisrael (Poland) held that the verse referred to the time the Israelites made the golden calf, "when their faces became dark like Kushites."¹⁰² In content and allegorical approach, this statement came straight from rabbinic midrash, such as from those stories about the uppity Kushite maidservant, which Shlomo b. Yisrael cited at length as a hermeneutic model (Song of Songs Rabbah 1:6; Otsar Midrashim, ch. 222, Piska 3). Appropriately, then, Shlomo b. Yisrael insisted that the Israelites' darkening occurred only in their imagination (אמר לישראל שדאי בדמיון בני כוש), as had been true for the color-coded conflict between the midrashic Black maidservant and her lighter mistress. Blackness here became a manifestation of the guilt of Whites.

Zvi Hirsch b. Avraham Eliezer Lipman of Halberstadt cited, in the name of Ibn Ezra, the statement that Kushites did not know their own fathers because of the fact that their women were treated sexually like public property, while Yosef Hess (d. 1793; Fürth, Kassel in Hessen) cited it in the name of R. David Kimhi.¹⁰³ Further on, Hess opined that Amos 9:7 could be understood as expressing a surprised rhetorical question: that the Israelites "are considered in the eyes [of God] like the lowly nation of the Kushites?"¹⁰⁴ The cause of Kushite lowliness remained unexplained here, though given the author's previous statements (see also further on in this section with regard to Ham), it would be overly generous to assume that it merely reflected eighteenth-century historical reality. According to Zvi Hirsch Lipman, the first half of Amos 9:7 ended with the phrase "says God" to show that the distinctiveness of Israel, here measured against Kushites, stemmed from divine sanction.¹⁰⁵ R. Re'uven b. Avraham ha-Levi teased out the same verse and its surrounding chapter to weave an exegesis reading Kushites as representing "the natural," while Israelites represented "the divine." In an obvious nod to Jeremiah 13:23, which was uncited, the former cannot change their nature or history, while the latter can.¹⁰⁶ The prominent R. Moses Sofer (1763–1839; Frankfurt, Pressburg) used Amos 9:7 to posit Kushites as ciphers for *difference* itself. While the Torah was given to all Jews, he wrote in one responsum, each individual excels (or not) by means of specific acts and passions for the sake of heaven: "In this no two individuals are alike, because no two men love God in the same way. Thus, Israel is called 'children of the Ethiopians,' for each one is externally different, but in essence each one is united with all Israel."¹⁰⁷ The invoked accidental, the external difference of Blacks erased, through a euphemizing mechanism, the personal differences between Jews, who all shared the essence of Torah, as all humans shared a similar inner essence. Despite this power of metaphorical erasure, Blacks continued to stand for – were invoked precisely because of – their difference from an imagined (White) norm. Hence, in what seems to have become a veritable trope, a number of hand-illustrated Passover haggadot and prayer books, produced by Ashkenazic artists, contained illustrations of

exotic Blacks and American Indians where bodily features are often of less help discerning the difference between the two kinds of savages than is the costuming.¹⁰⁸

Positive evaluations of Kushites can be found on occasion. Hayyim Yosef David Azulai had no trouble accepting the goodness of the biblical Eved Melekh the Kushite, "who gave his life for the prophet Jeremiah, to raise him out of the pit."¹⁰⁹ The author of a 1704 work on divine providence published in England argued that the blessing to be said on seeing a Kushite, among other "exotic" species ("Blessed are You, our God, King of the World, who varies the creatures"), pertained only to the "individual monster, not to any species created during the six days [of creation]," as Adam and Eve were "extremely beautiful, were formed by the holy hand of God."¹¹⁰ Though he never mentioned Kushites, the author's statement seems to refute their alleged "monstrous" status by including them as a species of human being.

Most Jewish writers continued to ignore the possibility of cursing Ham. Following a trope popular among Jewish authors influenced by the Renaissance, some few even gave Ham a positive gloss.¹¹¹ When a curse was cited, it was without any expansion or reworking of past motifs, such as in the previously mentioned travelogue of Sason Hai Castiel. Usually nothing connected the curse with Blackness. Using kabbalistic terminology, the prominent Hayyim Yosef David Azulai held that "the sons of Ham, Kush Egypt and Libya and Canaan, these are four shells," alluding to the contaminated material existence which hides the true divine inner essence.¹¹² Ya'akov Huli (ca. 1685–1732; Palestine, Constantinople) emphasized how the progeny of Shem maintained no friendship with "Ham nor with his seed, because they were evil."¹¹³

A few authors, both Ashkenazim and Sefardim, transmitted a curse on Ham, which wavered between entailing his descendants' Blackness and their eternal servitude. Avraham Broda (d. 1717; Bohemia, Metz, Frankfort) hinted several times in his exegesis of the incidents of Genesis 9 to "another curse," which would seem to allude to Ham's punishment as ■ Black.¹¹⁴ Within a discussion of astrological determinism, Yosef Hess conflated the midrash about Ham having sex in the ark and Rashi's explanation that his punishment was "that from him emerged Kush, whose descendants are black." This curse bore ■ manifestation derived from nature, "from the power of the sun, which strikes them with its natural force and causes them to be black."¹¹⁵ Re'uven b. Avraham (dates unknown) presented an expansive version of the curse, covering with it both servitude and Blackness, and buttressing his view with a glance at the contemporary world situation. The interpretation of Amos 9:7, in his view, determined that

[j]ust as the Kushites are created [lit., prepared] to be eternal slaves, ■ it says, "cursed be Kena'an, ■ slave" etc. [Gen. 9:25], so, from the perspective of the preparation

that is found in them they are more suitable for slavery [than others]. For until today the way of the black Kushites is to be absolute slaves, their [very] bones belonging to their masters in perpetuity.¹¹⁶

The word "preparation" used by Re'uven b. Avraham comprised a term taken from medieval philosophy. It referred to innate characteristics, here those of Blacks. These authors have not been deemed by history to be particularly prominent, yet some of them served as leaders in their communities.¹¹⁷

A few texts that became central to the canon of modern Jewish literature also related the story of Ham's curse. Rabbi Ya'akov Huli's Ladino anthology of *midrashim* on Genesis (1735), which began the vastly popular Ladino paraphrase of the Bible, the *Me'am Lo'ez*, similarly assumed that Ham's descendants lived cursed with Blackness. According to Martin A. Cohen, the *Me'am Lo'ez* served as "a major vehicle of Jewish education" within the Sephardic world.¹¹⁸ Huli retold the whole episode from *Midrash Tanhuma*, adding glosses that removed any ambiguities about the earlier text's target, whereas the version in one recension of the *Tanhuma* failed to mention the blackness of Ham and left out any explicit linkage to Kushites in general. Thus, Ham's second punishment, concerning his lips, Huli rendered as follows: "This [second punishment] is that, having spoken with his mouth to tell his brothers, his lips were made twisted, following which you can identify (*asegún atinarés*) all the Blacks who have protruding lips."¹¹⁹ The punishment for having failed to cover his father's nakedness becomes, according to Huli, that

[Ham] has to go naked in the flesh, for thus will you see all the slaves of Egypt who arrive naked, for in this manner they go about in their city and not due to poverty [do they go naked], for it is certain that one cannot manacle others so that they would have the ability to dress themselves. Rather it is due to the strength of the sun in those parts that it is not possible to be able to wear a shirt over the body, because one would be burned from the heat. And their place even requires this, it being in the southern parts, where the sun is very strong. But know that the curse of Noah caused their habitation to be in those parts so that they can go naked and be made black by the sun.

R. Huli here exploded the verse from Isaiah – already implicitly cited in the *Midrash Tanhuma* and explicitly cited in the same connection by Rashi and others – to encompass ■ decidedly contemporary significance. Whereas these other uses maintained the verse and its application in Ham's punishment on ■ purely mythological level, Huli read it as valid sociology: Those destined to be slaves in his day *do* go around naked. As far as Huli was concerned, the *Midrash Tanhuma* passage described a curse that condemns Ham's progeny to Blackness.¹²⁰ Into this mix he wove the common opinion that Kushite Blackness

originated with the sun. The location of Ham and his descendants in the sun-baked southern climes constituted an intentional part of Noah's curse. Their placement there in fact served as the method by which the curse was (to be) effected.¹²¹

Huli chose to present the most extreme versions of these statements. He also expressed an anti-Black attitude elsewhere. Treating the biblical story of Avraham and Sarah in Avimelech's Egypt, he reiterated Rashi's comment that the Egyptians were Black and ugly, in opposition to the White beauty of Sarah. In Huli's rendition, the Egyptians were Black and ugly *because* they descended from Kush.¹²²

In assimilated Jewish discourse from Western Europe, among those perhaps seeking precisely the material gain that Rabbi Bargas deplored, Jewish discourse regarding the colonies differed little from that of non-Jews. The author of a 1704 tract assessing natural philosophy, probably the London rabbi David Nieto, had one of the characters in his dialogue defend the Jews against charges of seeing the world's beings and forces as divinities by crying, "Who is to believe that a Jew believes that which the most blind ancient pagans did not believe, nor the most barbarous modern idolators of Asia and America?"¹²³ Though here these barbarous idolators received backhanded praise, their lower ideational powers were taken for granted. Such people represented, after all, the idolatrous peripheries of the civilized world: "The same cause that motivated God to pity Nineveh, will move him [to pity] Tartary, China and Japan, or any other people or nation, which should seem the same."¹²⁴ The wealthy English merchant Joseph Salvador, reduced by the 1780s to living in South Carolina, complained in a letter to his cousin about his new primitive surroundings:

I am now in a wild country have but one servant and tho' they speak English we frequently dont understand each other. The Inhabitants are descendants of the Wild Irish and their ignorance [is] amazing. They have all the bad Spanish Customs but none of that Nations good qualities. They are as poor as Rats and Proud as Dons. They will not work nor permit their families to serve. They are naked and famished and immensely lazy; they have no religion or morals, the few that have any adopt the Patriarchal systems. . . . Their minds are wholly bent on their Horses whom they pride more than their wives and families they hate Society and pass their days in the [?] or loitering about they drink hard. Rum is their deity, they Ruin their healths and are short livers always happy when they can do any ill-natured thing and molest their neighbors.¹²⁵

Salvador, who had been the first Jewish director of the British East India Company, thought here as an Englishman, seeing in the natives all the English Others: The Indians descend from "the Wild Irish" and bear "the bad Spanish Customs." The substance and tone of these judgments are unremarkable for

their commonplace attitude, yet remarkable in that they – together with his "exhaustive and detailed inventory of the Carolina flora and fauna" – probably reflect an attempt on Salvador's part to have his letter read to the Royal Society.¹²⁶ Salvador's intimate perspective is steeped in time-worn colonialist truisms and a wholesale deployment of "English" rhetorical modes.

A 1773 "vocabulary" of Hebrew, English, and Spanish, produced by a Sephardic Jew in England, embedded Kushites within the orderly conceptual framework of the new era. In the sixteenth chapter, entitled "Of Man and Relations," appeared words connected somehow with family, the cycle of life, the family of nations:

ערישה	The Cradle	La Cuna
אורח	Native	Nativo
חושב. תושב.	Inhabitant, inhabitants	Morador, moradizos
גר. גרים	A Foreigner, Foreigners	Peregrino, peregrinos
נכרי. נכרים	A stranger, strangers	Estrangero, estrangeros
לשון	A strange language	Barbaro
עם עמים	The people	Pueblo, pueblos
לאום לאומים	A nation nations	Pueblo, pueblos
גוי. גוים	A nation nations	Gente, Gentes
כוש כושיים	An Ethiopian Ethiopians	Ethiopeo, Ethiopeos ¹²⁷

Immediately following Kushites came Dead men, A giant, Kinds of giants, Dwarf, Pigmies, Congregation, Assembly, Company. This veritably stream-of-consciousness listing of terms situated Kushites on the cusp of the human and the monstrous, the typical and the unusual. In a lucidly binary manner, the author conceptualized that which defines the human life of the individual and his and her collective ("inhabitant," "people," "nation," "congregation"), but shifted into imagining the opposite, that which negates it ("foreigner," "a strange language," "Ethiopians," "Kinds of Giants," "Pigmies"). Elsewhere, in the twenty-second chapter, the "problematic" nature of Blackness arose again, now amid the "Blemishes and Defects of the Human Body":

קלוט	Shrunk	Encogido
בריאה משונה חוץ מהטבע	A Monster	Monstro
כוש שחור	A Black	Ethiopiso, Negro

Following were Lame, limping, Blind, Blindness, A Dwarf. Though far less developed and articulated only implicitly, Rodrigues Moreira's definitions fit right in with those offered by contemporary French dictionaries.¹²⁸

The difference between earlier discourse and this Sephardic "vocabulary" resides in formal qualities, in an organizational drive deriving from late Renaissance list making, Linneaus's *The System of Nature* (1735), and other like-minded sources: efforts at naming and tracking speciation, the construction of charts.¹²⁹ The rationalist *Encyclopedia Britannica* (3d ed., Edinburgh, 1792) described West African Blacks in language that might have come from any number of fifteenth- or sixteenth-century authors:

Vices the most notorious seem to be the portion of this unhappy race: idleness; treachery; revenge; cruelty; impudence; stealing; lying; profanity; debauchery; nastiness and intemperance all said to have extinguished the principles of natural law, and to have silenced the reproofs of conscience. They are strangers to every sentiment of compassion, and are an awful example of the corruption of man when left to himself.¹³⁰

This encyclopedia entry organized what had previously been discrete characteristics, called upon situationally, as needed. These denigrating adjectives have been assembled into a portrait. The entry's systematization itself reflected the increasingly formal divide between kinds of peoples. The traditional characteristics of Blacks were here gathered and arranged. These eighteenth-century attempts at systematizing marked, then, a different need than the sixteenth-century list makers' efforts "to order items that had been torn from their traditional frame of reference."¹³¹ Rather, they instantiated in absolute fashion the rational and inarguable order into which the objects of this ordering activity fit. At the same time, the features of this text do not introduce much that had not been said before. This variety of signifiers concerning Africans gathered in Edinburgh around 1792 relates no more directly to an essentialist differentiation between one variety of humans and another than does the gathering of signifiers in Mas'udi's recitation of Galen's alleged citations about Ethiopians, the Tanhuma depiction of Ham, the projections of Rambam and Ibn Khaldûn. They all contain a modal departure from sober presentation of material, reflective of the degree to which the authors or compilers of these texts felt Ethiopians or West Africans provoked the need to justify governance and rule. What frightens most about eighteenth-century concatenations of debasing semiotic units is its systematicity, its thoroughness, the cruelty behind its lengthy attention to a subaltern social group evident in the familiarity with the object of its venom. Yet the collective opinion of these well-educated British encyclopedists and Sephardic intellectuals merely stood on the shoulders of their well-educated predecessors.

The actuality of Blacks around – but rarely *in* – the Jewish communities of the Americas aroused attention here and there. In 1720 a translation of the Psalms into Spanish by Daniel Israel Lopez Laguna appeared in London,

composed by the ex-*Converso* poet while he resided in Jamaica. This circumstance of composition generated the following comments in a prefatory *Aprobacion* penned by Jahacob Henrriques Pimentel, a.k.a. Don Manuel de Humanes:

After seeing and admiring this Divine Work, the doubt occurred to me whether the innocent and smooth influence of Poetry could operate among Blacks, (whose purpose on that Island is precise and continuous) and found my doubt absolved in the Prince of the Latin Poets who says, *Est Deus in nobis, agitante callescimus illo* [God is in us, but although he urges us, we become deaf to him]. It follows that God assisted [the poet] with his influence, and for his greater nobility wanted that the dark shadows of the Blacks should serve to better enhance the lights and the brightnesses of this Divine FAITHFUL MIRROR OF LIVES, supposing that *Possita juxta se opposita, magis elluscescunt* [When opposites are juxtaposed, the more they shine forth].¹³²

About this Pimentel/De Humanes little is known. He was evidently a friend of Laguna's, and it would seem that his family and that of Laguna were close.¹³³ In any event, Pimentel/De Humanes used the mass of laboring Blacks – silent in remaining unnamed anywhere in the work, silent in remaining outside the influence of poetry – to measure the challenge overcome by the translator of the Psalms. His poetic efforts appeared all the more heroic in that their enlightenment came amidst surroundings darkened by the ignorance of dark primitives. This praise of the author comes as a denigration of the low level of colonial culture, made low by the "precise and continuous" labor/production needs foisted on the colony by metropolitan tastes, though the blame, ironically, was pinned precisely on those who involuntarily serviced those needs.

Another set of statements assimilated to a non-Jewish vocabulary and context, this time concerning Surinam, can be found in Isaac de Pinto's 1748 call (published anonymously) to alleviate the impoverishment of Sephardic Amsterdam by systematically shipping poor Jews to the colonies (he mentioned Surinam, Curaçao, Jamaica, and Barbados), among other methods. A sober financial leader – he had that year become a director of the Dutch East India Company – De Pinto recognized the various problems then facing Surinam, the colony he nonetheless preferred as most favorable to his proposal's success, including the "decadence" of plantation existence and the escapes and depredations executed by the runaway slaves.¹³⁴ De Pinto also expressed an ambivalent awareness of the impact the slave system's "decadence" had on the slaves themselves. "The excesses which are committed with the female slaves irritates the Blacks, naturally very susceptible to jealousy, [leading them] to these acts of vengeance," he added in a note.¹³⁵ De Pinto, familiar with the philosophical and scientific literature of the elite circles in which he moved, wielded the

increasingly voiced sympathy toward the conditions faced by slaves but also the continuing constraints imposed on such sympathy by prejudice, here regarding Black sexual atavism.¹³⁶ Ironically, in a pamphlet devoted by an identified Sephardic Jew to the problems of the Jewish poor, not once did De Pinto explicitly discuss the Jewish experience in the colonies. Although he focused on colonies with Sephardic communities capable of hosting this new influx of potential manpower, his perspective remained that of a generally concerned civic engineer.¹³⁷

Under the sign of the *Haskala*, the Jewish Enlightenment, little changed. A remark by Isaac Satanov constitutes a rare recognition of conceptual transformations. Satanov (1732–1804; Satanov, Podolia; Berlin) was a contributor to the first Hebrew journal to promote Enlightenment views, *Hameassef*. In his commentary to the *Sefer ha-Kuzari* of R. Yehuda ha-Levi, Satanov considered the verse in which Kushites were first raised as an exemplum (1:1). There, ha-Levi had listed the qualities lacked by Kushites, which included the faculty of speech. Commented Satanov:

That is to say internal speech, which is intelligence, which is very lacking in the Kushite. And because of this it was seen fit to allow them to be maltreated and to be sold like animals for they were considered akin to beasts. But the philosophers of our time have signaled that they are human beings like us. Therefore they banned mistreating them.¹³⁸

Satanov reported contemporary philosophical developments regarding Blacks, no doubt those stemming from English and French rationalists, if not the French Revolution itself, in which Blacks were granted inclusion in the category of humanity and protection of certain of their human rights.¹³⁹ One cannot gauge from this brief comment whether Satanov knew about the abolitionist movements beginning to agitate England and France at the time.¹⁴⁰ Satanov's reportage was remarkably noncommittal, betraying little sympathy, if any, for these developments. These were, it would seem, merely developments concerning others, out there somewhere.

COLONIAL JEWISH DISCOURSE

In the colonies themselves, where the Black presence made itself rather more known, Jewish discourse availed itself of the more frequent social contacts with Blacks and more intimate knowledge of Black culture. This more intimate knowledge seemed for the most part to confirm negative opinions of Blacks.

The engraved tombstone of one Curacaoan Sephardi who died suddenly in the prime of life depicts his family weeping around his bed, while a Black slave stands at the doorway, holding a basin of water. As mentioned in Chapter 9,

Isaac S. Emmanuel reproduced a photo of this detail, which he thought indicated that the slave "is about to perform a service," probably meaning that he would either pour out the water, according to the Jewish folk custom, or wash the body.¹⁴¹ One tombstone from the Jodensavanne community recorded that the deceased was "killed by the cruel rebelling Negroes . . . may his blood be avenged," while another conveyed the lament that the buried person died at the hands of "rebelling Negroes in the flower of his youth."¹⁴² Another Jodensavanne tombstone, memorializing the burial spot of one of the community's most respected leaders, possessed "an epitaph that recounts his demise after beating his rebellious black slaves during an uprising."¹⁴³ These scenes of engraved discourse reiterated the ideology that convinced masters and their White peers that their harshness posed a necessary protection against the bestial, politically untrained Blacks over whom they ruled for the latter's benefit. These tumular moments convey some of the varying relationships Jews shared with their Black slaves, but the impact remained highly local. Although the stones might have been shipped from Amsterdam, the designs and workmanship came out of the Caribbean communities themselves, for whom these scenes reflected and constructed the meaning of these relationships.

As in Europe, Blacks often served as mere illustrative material for the lives of their Jewish owners. A serial publication entitled "The Chapters of Isaac the Scribe" appeared in various 1772 issues of the *New York Journal or General Advertiser* and was later republished separately. Probably written by the prominent New York Sephardi Isaac Pinto (1721–1791), its pages recount episodes of a sea voyage from New York to London. Describing a young woman named Richie, no doubt Richa Franks, daughter of prominent New York Ashkenazic merchant Jacob Franks, the author lauded her piety, feminine meekness and charitableness, and noble character. In order to highlight her nobility, readers were told the seemingly inconsequential facts of her entourage: "[S]he entered into the ship, she and her man servant, and her maid servant; moreover she had an handmaid, an Ethiopian, whose skin was as the jet of the merchants, exceeding black and shining."¹⁴⁴ This Ethiopian handmaid, of whom no more is heard, continued, then, to play her proverbial role as contrastive proof of her mistress's Whiteness.

Within Surinam, a special prayer was composed by *hazan* David Hisquiau Louzada, to be read when the Jewish regiment went out to battle against the Maroons.¹⁴⁵ The date of its composition is unknown, though it must derive from after 1777, when Louzada took on the position of congregational cantor.¹⁴⁶ Zvi Loker and Robert Cohen speculated that the prayer "was presumably read on Sabbath, near the end of the service," but there is in fact no evidence of its actually having been said in public.¹⁴⁷ The prayer begged for protection against "all those who go to war against our Black enemies, cruel and rebellious," and

for success "to bring down and conquer and destroy all the Kushite enemies, the rebellious and cruel, who intend and plot evil toward us."¹⁴⁸ Louzada's prayer reflects a specific worldview, that of the Surinamese Jewish planters, since his family owned at least one estate in the colony, as well as the requisite Blacks to work it.¹⁴⁹

The *Haham* Joshua Hezekiah DeCordova, rabbi in Kingston, Jamaica, offered a detailed opinion of contemporary Africans in the course of arguing that ancient pagans, and not ancient Jews, constituted the true barbarians:

[E]ven at present, two hundred persons are murdered every day for the table of the king of Mococco, near Congo, master of the greatest part of Africa; and it is a constant custom, to this day, when the chief of the Coromantees dies, to cut off the heads of his servants, and to fix them round his grave.¹⁵⁰

The Coromantees made up a large percentage of the Africans brought to Jamaica, the author's home, as slaves, though it is unclear whence the author derived his information. Despite attacking in this work the antireligious attitudes of Enlightenment philosophy, the first item he mentioned regarding the Coromantees, according to the author, was "affirm[ed]" by Thomas Cornely, while the continued litany of "similar barbarous customs" DeCordova derived from Von Pufendorf's *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*.¹⁵¹ The excesses of African despotism comprised a staple of eighteenth-century rhetoric justifying the slave trade and European moral superiority. One popular English school textbook related that a hundred men were killed daily for the table of the Congo king only because there, "human flesh is looked upon as a delicious dish."¹⁵² DeCordova's opinion no doubt also relates to his personal status. Originally from Amsterdam, where he studied at the Ets Haim yeshiva of the Spanish and Portuguese community there, in 1749 he went to Curaçao to assist the rabbi of the Mikveh Israel congregation, before transferring in 1755 to Kingston.¹⁵³ In 1764, 300 acres of land in St. Thomas Parish were patented to him.¹⁵⁴ DeCordova owned at least one slave; he ran an advertisement for a runaway slave in the *Royal Gazette* in 1792.¹⁵⁵ His attitudes about Africans no doubt related as well to the rabbi's inclusion, along with nine other Jews, in the social-literary society called "The European Club," formed in 1787 by some of Kingston's prominent residents.¹⁵⁶

The *Historical Essay on the Colony of Surinam* (1788) represents one of the most remarkable and unique early modern literary productions by Jews.¹⁵⁷ Inspired by Christian Döhm's ideas for ameliorating the condition of the Jews through civic and political emancipation and the opening of trades, it presented a history of the colony of Surinam and, throughout, a description of the loyal and useful contributions of the Jews. It will serve as an excellent text with which to end our analysis of Jewish discourse about Blacks precisely because of the obvious

polemical motivations operative within the text. Since portraying the good civic qualities of the Sephardic Jews comprised a major goal of the *Historical Essay*, its recitation of their behavior as citizens, planters, slave masters and soldiers against runaway slaves served as more than "objective" description: It constituted part of the rhetorical arsenal aimed at destroying the negative anti-Jewish stereotypes then regnant.

Though rational and objective in tone, the text fairly consistently denigrated and marginalized Blacks and non-Whites. The minimal Christianity conveyed to the slaves at the end of the eighteenth century by Moravian priests only "added to [the slaves'] natural spitefulness, dissimulation and hypocrisy, as they still pursue their ancient pagan customs and superstitions" (135).¹⁵⁸ Sexual knowledge and lasciviousness among the young colonists derived "only from communication with the Negroes" (154). The "frightful ceremonies" of the Black healers were "unworthy of all those who profess a religion" (156), such that the physician author David Nassy devoted several pages to their exhibition under the heading "Medicine. Empiricism. Deceit of the Negroes in General" (156-63). The quackery of the primitive - "empiricist" - Black healers was contrasted with the European sciences with which the Jewish authors aligned themselves. Immediately following this section, perhaps as exorcism for "having spoken at too great length with regard to the Negroes of the colony" (162-63), came a disquisition on another *echt* European pursuit shared by Jews, "Literature in General. Literary Societies, Libraries, Etc."¹⁵⁹ Regarding the years after the economic crisis lasting into the 1770s, the author(s) complained of government posts that previously went to the Jews now going to "half-breeds and mulattoes, both bastards and legitimate, [who] have lucrative posts to the detriment of these unfortunate whites, who count among the mothers of these mulattoes many of their slaves who had been manumitted by themselves" (106). Later on, the text proffered complaints about retail competition from Black women slaves, who sold goods on the street for their mistresses (120).

Since non-Jewish Dutch authors "failed to find a place in their writings" for the Jews' contributions to the civic peace, the authors of the *Historical Essay on Surinam* repeatedly "endeavor[ed] to bring to light the most successful expeditions which [the Jews] undertook against the common enemies of the country" (emphasis added; 66). The highlighting of the shared nature of the threat of slave uprisings and escapes - and Jewish "courage, . . . discipline, and . . . burning zeal to serve the colony" - helped commend the overlooked Jewish contribution, "equal [to that of] the Christians," to the maintenance of the state's security. Hence, the *Historical Essay on Surinam* included in its description of a successful 1743 anti-Maroon expedition of Captain David Cohen Nassy the fact that "the enemies were attacked on the day of Kippur, or of Atonement of the Jews, and without any regard for this sacred day, he pursued the enemies, set fire

to their cabins, utterly ruined the village, tore out of the ground the roots of their victuals, took fourteen prisoners, and killed a large number" (68).¹⁶⁰ Jewish service to the colony came before sacred devotion, according to this tableau, a direct riposte against the many expressions of Christian doubt about whether Jews could make good citizen soldiers if they could not fight on their holy days.

An anonymous reviewer of the 1791 Dutch edition of the *Historical Essay on Surinam* for *The Monthly Review* of London picked up on the importance of the motif of the Jewish anti-Maroon soldier in his review, which was largely a matter of paraphrase. Following his source's language closely, he noted how

[t]he great check to the prosperity of Surinam has been, that its inhabitants were exposed to the invasions and depredations of the Marrons or runaway Negroes, who . . . are most implacable and cruel enemies to the planters. *Against these marauders the Jewish militia have often signalized themselves, and have been of great use to the colony.* Several expeditions are here very minutely related, which shew no small degree of courage and conduct.¹⁶¹

Yet Jews made good, kind masters and maintained the loyalty of their Blacks, according to the authors of the *Historical Essay on Surinam*. Several pages were devoted to describing the warm reception given to a party of Jews chasing runaways from the La Parra plantation, who visited a village of the Juka Maroon, with whom a peace treaty had just been signed. These runaways from Jewish homes "entertained these Jews in every possible way, and each one hastened to lavish foodstuffs upon them and to offer them, as a mark of unlimited affection, their own wives and daughters." Later, Fosso, the chief, "who formerly belonged to the Jews," recounted "the pleasure that he had felt at the good reception which they generally gave his old masters." Fosso alluded to his family ties to these Jews, the La Parras, who "belonged to the family of the Nassys, whose slave he had once been." The description culminates in Fosso's speech after prayers on Sabbath morning: "See, my children, what I have told you a thousand times about the Jewish people, my old masters; they are not like the other white people whom we have seen; they love God, and they will never do anything before praying to Him and serving Him with respect." The "speech . . . penetrated the souls of all the Negroes in favor of the Jews," whose cause in hunting the runaways the Maroons decided to join (86–88). Too many details conspire here to insinuate that the whole scene comprised a projection of the authors' desires for how the Jews would like to be seen. The events were not invented, that is, but couched so that the beneficence, moderation, and liberalism of Jews emerged in its obviousness from the affection of the former slave of Jews. Yet elements of a socially conscious presentation of self surface as

well. The Jewish planter-soldiers visiting Juka took advantage of Fosso's interest "with regard to religious ceremonies" by attempting to make their ceremonies more impressive: They "displayed many more mannerisms and bowings than ordinarily" (88).

While touting colonial tolerance in order to challenge Europe's smug self-centeredness, the authors also reiterated the Whiteness of the Jews. They repeatedly highlighted the fact that the Jews "were numerous enough to form more than a third of the white population" (75). Clearly, the Sephardim fully considered themselves White. The Surinamese Jewish leaders who authored the *Historical Essay* erased Blacks and substituted Jews as the objects of the infamous *Code Noir*, whose title "appears rather to designate the blackness of fanaticism and of religious intolerance than the color of the Negroes," which motivated it and lent its name for the title (230, n. 18). The importance of Jewish Whiteness can be gauged from the approving quotation of Abbé Raynal's *Histoire Philosophique et Politique* (3d ed. [The Hague, 1774]), which attributed Jewish rights and privileges in Surinam to "the progress of the spirit of commerce," which "silences all national or religious prejudices in the face of the general interest which should bind men together. What are . . . these empty labels: Jews, Lutherans, French, Dutch?" (139–40). Vast areas of this progressive commerce of course depended precisely on the dehumanization of certain populations on the basis of physiological and cultural prejudices. The label designating "non-White" stood as amply full as the space left out for it in the collective of approved groups: Jews, Lutherans, French, Dutch.

An anecdote in the text's second part shows how Jewish specificities added to a Creole trumping of Europe, as the *Historical Essay* figured Surinam as an American paradise of harmony and tolerance, where Jewish isolationism and stubborn traditionalism yielded way to modern civic togetherness. The anecdote's events concerned

a witticism of a French plantation manager [who] stated to one of his compatriots at Lyon . . . who had boasted too much of the tolerance of France, that in Surinam he had eaten in a house the family of which was composed of pagans, Jews, Roman Catholics, Greek schismatics, and Calvinists. They were, he added, all at the table, gay and contented and living, besides, in perfect union. (136)¹⁶²

A footnote elaborated:

This matter is true. A decent Jew, well-read and of good judgment, [who] had a Negress as his concubine, who gave him several children who were reared in the [Dutch] Reformed religion. He later legitimately married off his eldest daughter to a Roman Catholic widower, a man of much merit but who, unfortunately, had, by

his first marriage, a son who, born in Russia, was raised in the Greek [Orthodox] religion. Thus the father was Jewish, the mother pagan, the husband Catholic, the wife Calvinist, and his son a Greek schismatic. After the husband died, his wife became a strict Anglican. (242, n. 9)

The religious tolerance conveyed by the narrative masked a social system grounded in the exploitation of those with darkest skin and the suppression of their religious culture. Finally, particularly significant in terms of the construction of Sephardic Whiteness in Surinam, the history of the colored Jews, born of Sephardic transracial sex, and their congregation underwent almost complete erasure from the authors, Jewish mulattos receiving barely a mention in passing.¹⁶³

The depth of the *Historical Essay's* orientation to Whiteness can be read from the total imbrication of the text in the commerce of colonialism and plantation agriculture – discussions of slave taxes, the history of anti-Maroon efforts, Surinamese profitability, crop selection. “Although the saddest and most somber of any other place in the world,” Surinam afforded those with lighter skin a lifestyle “most salutary. Everything that the richest man can have, the poor man can equally have” (167). The improved society offered utopian possibilities regardless of class lines, while the racial dimension dropped out of the portrait. The text’s penultimate paragraph – but the climactic one, as the final paragraph comprises mere summary and closing – exploded in an idyllic vision of Surinam’s modest planters, a pastoral romance in which “the Jew” has fused with other free colonists into “the Planter,” having shed the unproductive, mediated, urban life of the ghettos for agrarian simplicity. On the plantations,

generally speaking, the managers get up at dawn, examine the surroundings, go to the gardens, and return to the house to take their coffee or tea, go off once again to inspect the jobs which the Negroes have done there, and return ordinarily at 10 o’clock. Then they breakfast very quickly, receive the mutual visits of their friends the other managers, and, if they are alone, they go to take a rest until two or three o’clock in the afternoon, return to the places of their work, and take their dinner and their supper together, ordinarily at six o’clock in the evening. In this fashion, and with this uniformity, they pass their lives delightfully. (167)

Edenic restfulness – edenic because the curse of having to toil on the earth for bread had been magically removed; it was done for you: “the jobs which the Negroes have done there” – suffuses the scene and its setting with a hilariously ill-concealed suppression of those whose hard labor made this leisurely life possible. The fulfillment of Enlightenment reformers’ dreams, the Jew in Surinam had become the most glorified peasant imaginable: “If there are some among them who get drunk and make an uproar with their neighbors, this

is no reason at all to accuse the managers in general of all sorts of punishable irregularities” (168). The desired end to alleged Jewish parasitism – direct connection to the land – had in this case been unknowingly subverted by sleight of hand, remaining indirect, requiring the labor of Others, obvious but invisible Black bodies.¹⁶⁴

Beyond the *Historical Essay*, Surinam played a definite role in the construction of Jewish identity for both Jews and non-Jews. The characteristics of Jewish Surinam that attracted the attention of European Christian thinkers, such as Döhm, interested in “the Jewish question,” appealed as well to Jews beyond Surinam. In 1728, a petition “of some of the Jews” of Jamaica argued that legislation should be “distinguishing such Jews as are planters only from those that are traders and for the relief of the former in respect to the general tax that may be laid on the Jews.”¹⁶⁵ Although the language cited here comes from the House minutes and not the petition in question, it no doubt reflected the attempt of these planter Jews to construct a new and less burdensome identity for themselves as productive citizens. The Amsterdam writer Isaac de Pinto foreshadowed some of this Enlightenment rhetoric in his 1748 pamphlet as well.¹⁶⁶ The strong, loyal farmer-citizen represented by the Sephardic planters in their struggle against the rebellious Black forces threatening to bring down the ordered politics of the colony clearly possessed resonance. The Sephardic poetess Benvenida Belmonte composed a panegyric on the exploits of a 1718 expedition led by David Nassy against the Maroons.¹⁶⁷ Such Jewish military achievements were not to be found in Europe, of course. Thus, as late as 1849, when Isaac da Costa, who had converted to Calvinism but retained great affection for and pride in things Jewish, published a history of the Jews, his summary of their Caribbean experiences included these military triumphs:

Meanwhile, the Dutch Government still found faithful and industrious subjects among the Jews of the Savanna, in Surinam. Great service was rendered by various members of the families of Pinto da Fonseca, Arias, Naër, de Brito, d’Avilar . . . in the wars which were carried on both in [the seventeenth] century and the succeeding one against the Indians and Negroes; another, David Nasi, met with death in his thirty-first campaign against the latter, in the year 1743, at the age of seventy.¹⁶⁸

ABOLITION

Only the most minimal expression of opposition to Black slavery or trade in it by Jews before 1800 can be found, despite the existence of such opposition among Quakers and various women’s groups in England. No clear statement in eighteenth-century halakhic literature of abolitionist sentiments has come to my attention. As mentioned in Chapter 9, Amsterdam rabbi David de Rephael

Meldola held that the positive command "to work them [non-Jewish slaves] forever" (Lev. 25:46) held force only over literal, historical Canaanite slaves and not "at this time."¹⁶⁹ Whether Meldola's statement can be equated with the desire to see slavery as an institution demolished appears questionable. In the early eighteenth century, R. Ya'akov Avraham of Cracow wrote explicitly against the view that non-Jewish slaves were to be held in perpetuity (Lev. 25:46). Commenting on the biblical passages in which Avraham's slave Eliezer appeared, Ya'akov Avraham summoned up supporters of perpetual enslavement for non-Jewish slaves among the kabbalists, who argued that "manumitted / *meshuḥrar*" should be read as an allusion to "ox and donkey / *shor ve-ḥamor*," which the bible commands one not to use together with one plow (Deut. 22:10). In this kabbalistic perspective, then, the problem of liberating slaves is the mingling of different species. Ya'akov Avraham rejected this reasoning, asserting that

now we hear that one is not recused from [helping] his friend except through a precept of *halakha*, for in the depths of *halakha* this is turned from severity to mercy. We will find that even an ox and donkey, which are of the aspect of the external shell [i.e., things material, lowly, even obstructive] turn to holiness. And the slave's manumission is beautiful, that the ox and donkey came together into holiness among the descendants of Avraham.¹⁷⁰

This worthwhile sentiment suggested to readers the holiness of liberating one's slaves. Whether it proposed the abolition of slavery as an institution is more tenuous, if its author indeed had American slavery in mind, which is doubtful.

If *halakha* could/should have questioned anything in a situation such as Surinam, it would have been limited to protesting the excesses of cruelty that such a plantation society produced.¹⁷¹ But the contention of scholars that those communities that discriminated against African slaves and their mulatto descendants did so *against* Jewish law can only be supported if one has a view of *halakha* as monolithic and consistently applied, as well as a view that unrealistically segregates *halakha* as an ideal from the day-to-day actualities of Jewish practices, even institutional ones. This view also forgets that social/religious acceptance or rejection of former slaves whose Judaism was not questioned (the variety of situations in Amsterdam or Surinam; Cochin is somewhat more complicated) is a separate issue from enslavement of non-Jews. In Surinam's Jodensavanne, the mahamad – the communal and religious authority – itself was "empowered to administer estates," "as was the case also in some of the Sephardic European and West Indian congregations." Until 1743, the Jodensavanne mahamad operated for its owners "a plantation called Nahamu (Comfort Ye – Isa. 40:1) which included 112 slaves."¹⁷² Eighteenth-century Jamaican Jews occasionally bequeathed slaves (or money or land) to their synagogue for the upkeep of the Abi

Yetomim confraternity, which provided education for orphans.¹⁷³ Since there is no halakhic prohibition on employing slaves on a plantation, the members of a mahamad in Surinam or Amsterdam – all leading communal figures – would not have been going against any halakhic dictates. So while some prominent rabbis were condemning racial discrimination, other prominent rabbis and communal leaders instituted or maintained practices of de facto racial oppression.

True, rifts existed on many issues between rabbinic and lay leaders of Sephardic communities not just in the Americas but in Europe as well. Richard Menkis wrote that the Bordeaux Jewish "community structure was controlled by a strong lay leadership, overshadowing clerical authority to a degree which probably surpassed even the strong lay influence in the Sephardic community of Amsterdam," Brazil, Curaçao, Surinam, or London.¹⁷⁴ None of the mahamads of these communities included a rabbi, who was always an employee of these boards. The Amsterdam Sephardic community was "run by the wealthiest 20 percent of the community," though it lacked the "tight oligarchic control" of the Bordeaux community.¹⁷⁵ The interests behind maintenance of anti-Black attitudes and social and legal structures seem obvious. But before one blames "lay" leaders and absolves rabbis (i.e., *halakha*), it should be kept in mind, for instance, that no historian has yet cited any complaint to a rabbi or rabbinic responsum protesting the Amsterdam decrees of the mid-seventeenth century excluding Jewish mulattos in certain ways. Even further, the members of the mahamad, wrote Miriam Bodian, were "entrusted, along with other tasks, with maintaining rabbinic norms."¹⁷⁶ Nor have I seen anyone cite rabbinic protests against the eighteenth-century exclusion of Jewish mulattos from certain forms of participation in the Jewish community of Surinam. These mulattos, whose Jewish status was socially, not halakhically, questioned, ultimately took their complaints to the secular Dutch authorities, charging the mahamad with violating biblical injunctions demanding one law "both for you of the congregation and also for the stranger that sojourneth with you."¹⁷⁷

As for abolition in the quasi-secular/quasi-missionary mode, there is only the intriguing but cloudy case of Isaac Yeshurun Sasportas, who tried (unsuccessfully) to instigate slave rebellions on Curaçao and Jamaica in 1799, in part in the name of the French Revolution's egalitarian ideals.¹⁷⁸ Joanna Westphal found "no evidence of Jewish involvement in the abolitionist movement" in Barbados.¹⁷⁹ Some few others were quieter abolitionists or, better, ameliorationists. Judah Touro (b. 1775), who had known the abolitionist Rev. Samuel J. May and other progressives as a young man, possibly derived from them "the sentiments which induced [him], in his New Orleans home, to purchase slaves with a view to restoring them to liberty."¹⁸⁰

Though similar in many ways sociologically to the Quakers in the American colonies, the Sephardim shared neither their radical activism nor feelings of

belonging as Christians, which, despite the Quakers' persecution at the hands of the Anglican establishment, allowed protest against Christian sins. The Philadelphia Quaker merchant Jonathan Dickinson, for instance, who traded in slaves with Jacob Gutierrez of Jamaica, among others, wrote to Gutierrez in 1715 what has been seen by some scholars as one hint among many others of his wish to extricate himself from this troublesome and troubling business: "One of thy Negroes I sold I have Yett by mee a promissory note for the payment of which I Expect will be made good. I am Very Unfitt for Comission bussiness being taken up other wayes."¹⁸¹ Dickinson's squeamishness definitely straddled the border between morality and pragmatism, however, and he continued dealing in slaves until his death in 1722.¹⁸² By 1766, the English Bishop Warburton could sermonize before the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel that masters broke "divine and human laws by keeping slaves."¹⁸³ Such antiestablishment agitation appeared too dangerous to be indulged in by Jews.

Instead, one finds a number of Jewish converts to Christianity advocating either amelioration or cessation of the condition of the Black slaves.¹⁸⁴ One Englishman, Joseph Ottolenghe, descendant of the famous Italian Jewish Ottolenghi family, was chosen in 1750 and funded by the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts "to go over to Georgia as a Catechist for instructing in Christianity the Negroes there." He left for the colony that year, along with his wife and manservant.¹⁸⁵ From his revealing and descriptive letters back to the society, one gets a clear idea of his kind intentions toward and care for Blacks, his desire for improving their situation, and his devout Christianity. I did not detect in his words any references to Jews or Judaism.¹⁸⁶ The Jamaican Member of Assembly (from 1835) Alexandre Bravo, "while holding the ownership of nearly a thousand slaves on his several estates, . . . became a champion of the emancipation of the blacks in Jamaica, advocating the measure in all its stages both by vote and influence."¹⁸⁷ Though born a Jew, he and his family had converted to Christianity in 1833. Another such case is François Marie Paul Libermann (1802–1852), an Alsatian Jew, born as Jacob or Jagel, who converted to Catholicism in Paris and went on to found a missionary institute dedicated to "the salvation of the Black race" in Africa and the New World, the Congregation of the Sacred Heart of Mary.¹⁸⁸ It is unwarranted to read any kind of "Jewish" progressivism into the missionary activities of these New Christians, whose views differed not at all from the missionaries to the Blacks who had been born Christian.

In the nineteenth century, some Jews with progressive leanings sympathized with, if not supported and participated in, the burgeoning abolition movements. The English Isaac Lyon Goldsmid (1778–1859), scion of the famous banking and mercantile family, "took a lively interest in all progressive movements, cooperating closely with philanthropists, such as Clarkson, Wilberforce,

Zachary Macaulay and Elizabeth Fry, in the emancipation of the slaves."¹⁸⁹ Not coincidentally, Goldsmid also supported the campaign for Jewish civil emancipation. Moses Elias Levy (1781–1854) poses another exceptional example. Moroccan-born, resident in the British West Indies for twenty years, Levy became a plantation owner in Florida in an attempt to establish a Jewish settlement. But even Levy's abolitionist career proves my point. A devout and practicing Jew, Levy had his own rather idiosyncratic brand of orthodoxy. As he did not believe in the Oral Law, a basic element of rabbinic Judaism, his Judaism comprised a Jewish form of Protestant Old Testament fundamentalism. In 1828, he penned an antislavery tract, but published it anonymously in London. Levy's abolitionism took place in England, safely distant from his home and Florida plantations.¹⁹⁰ Jewishness still, for the most part, barred any outwardly Jewish abolitionism.

The pattern of early Jewish abolitionist sentiment fits in well with Seymour Drescher's thesis about abolitionism in general. He found that Anglo-American abolitionism stood unique and did not replicate itself in the Dutch or French colonial orbits.¹⁹¹ Given this Anglo-American anomaly, it is not surprising to find Jews in the Netherlands, Curaçao, or Surinam failing to express abolitionist ideas; their Calvinist neighbors failed to do so as well. Drescher perhaps underestimated support in France for the granting of rights to free colored people and even Blacks. Here, too, often relatively liberal Sephardic attitudes followed the surrounding pattern. The "colonists' club of Bordeaux, whose president was [prominent Bordeaux Sephardi] David Gradis, supported free colored demands for representation in the National Assembly" in 1789, even before Jewish representation was to be considered.¹⁹² As John Garrigus showed, the overlapping Jewish and colored arguments for limited emancipation contributed to the mutual support and recognition of these two polemical discourses. But until later in the nineteenth century, these Jewish voices remained wholly exceptional.

Those Jews involved in the owning or trading of slaves thoroughly ensconced themselves in their national slave economy's methods and terminology. No collective or public effort in any American Jewish community attempted to resist or modify the reigning slave system's practices or attitudes. This should not cause surprise. The situation of Jews in the Protestant Americas remained tenuous; Jews were barely tolerated outsiders. In the 1760s, some voices in Surinam even called for the establishment in Paramaribo of a ghetto. To weigh in against the host majority on a central and contentious issue like slavery held little appeal for Jews.

Perhaps, on the contrary, many of those Jews owning slaves or otherwise engaged in the slave economy probably saw slaves as an opportunity. Given the combined feelings of persecution and merit experienced by many Jews, the

recurrent trope of Jewish freedom from menial labor must be taken seriously. In this view, Jews, whose true nobility went unrecognized by most, deserved the privileges of nobility. Some Jewish elites seem to have shared conceptions about the tainted nature of manual labor and the legitimacy of coercing it from certain kinds of other people.

Though rarely challenging the reigning discourse about Blacks, Jewish statements reflected only the most tepid and circumscribed version of it. Blacks served Jewish authors, especially within the gravitational pull of the colonial slave economy, as a rhetorical foil against which their own Whiteness shone forth. But eighteenth-century Jewish discourse knew next to nothing about the extensive and growing ethnographic and scientific literature on Blacks, on Africa, on slavery.¹⁹³ Comments about Ham, though overwhelmingly negative, remained barely modified from those of previous centuries and were still proffered only in the vicinity of exegesis on the verses of Genesis 9. Their only novelty may have come from an increasingly naturalistic understanding of how the curse operated. Significantly, despite the racialized vocabulary of various ascamot from Amsterdam, Surinam, and Curaçao, halakhic discourse in this period *never* replaced the terminology of "Canaanite" slaves with language referring to Blacks or integrated into the abstract terminology of slave law any recognition of Atlantic slavery – other than the literally single example of a sole statement in Gabay Yzidro's *Yad Avraham*. In this regard, one senses a vast difference between rabbinic thought and the bodies of administrative socio-political discourse coming out of the European metropolises and their colonies. Eighteenth-century Jews had little regard for Blacks, then, but little interest in observing, researching, and describing them.

With the increased influx of "scientific" scholarship in Jewish spheres came a concomitant interest in ethnography. Thus, in the late 1830s, Isaac Mendes Belisario, a painter and engraver in Jamaica, grandson of the famous London rabbi of the same name, executed a series of prints presenting the colony's colored population.¹⁹⁴ In his preface, the artist expressed "a desire to hand down faithful delineations of a people, whose habits, manners, and costume, bear the stamp of originality, and in which changes are being daily effected by the rapid strides of civilization." Nothing in the explanatory text or illustrations revealed a "Jewish" perspective; readers find a chatty personal guide speaking in the universalized syntax of Whiteness, albeit sympathetically (the cover bears this epigraph: "Nothing extenuate, nor ought set down in malice"). A decade or so earlier in Polish Galicia, Shimshon b. Yitshak ha-Levi Bloch (1784–1845), a writer influenced by the Haskala, or Jewish Enlightenment, wrote a world geographic/ethnographic survey, of which most of the second volume treated Africa. The objective tone and scholarly presentation conveys rather than hides the ideological baggage of its producer. "A scholar will sin through all sins, in all

paths will the foot of the researcher tread toward any goal, his eyes will witness wonders," Bloch informed his audience when introducing the African continent. "The people who lives [here] differs from all others both in its appearance and in the character of its soul. From it came the blacks (*negeren*), a people more numerous than all the African nations, whose visage is darker than blackness, whose appearance [is] a disfigurement of the human and whose intelligence [a disfigurement] of human understanding."¹⁹⁵ Bloch's view could claim little originality; indeed, his work for the most part constituted an adaptation of German geography books. Already in 1772, Johann Gottfried von Herder had considered that "the black man with his complexion, with his blackness lighter than ink, with his lips and hair and his male turkey tongue [i.e., language], with his stupidity and indolence is probably a natural brother of the apes of the same climate."¹⁹⁶ For Bloch, whose knowledge of American slavery or personal acquaintance with Africa or Africans may have been minimal or nonexistent, the debased Blacks served merely to confirm European superiority for Europeans of all religious persuasions. Bloch had dedicated his work's first volume to his teacher, the pioneering Jewish Enlightener Nachman Krochmal.

(In)Conclusion

Just as the future ripens in the past, so does the past decay in the future.

Anna Akhmatova

To rework the pattern of social relationships is to rearrange the coordinates of the experienced world.

Clifford Geertz, *Interpretation of Cultures*, 28

By sitting still one cannot avoid what is not yet here.

Santob de Carrión, *Proverbios Morales*

Hayden White, following Northrop Frye, noted that historiographies "cast in the Ironic mode . . . gain their effects precisely by frustrating normal expectations about the kinds of resolutions provided by stories cast in other modes (Romance, Comedy, or Tragedy, as the case may be)."¹ Indeed, my analysis is purposefully antinarrative (which does not make it not a narrative) for exactly the reason White adduced: to reconstitute "history as a form of intellectual activity which is at once poetic, scientific, and philosophical in its concerns."² I tried to thematize the contradictions, ambivalences, and ambiguities of early modern Jewish-Black relations on the surface or in the structure of the text, rather than allow them to reside poorly concealed, to eat away at the fundamentals of "the story."

A study of early modern Black-Jewish relations offers a perfect opportunity to question the ways in which group needs have erected certain problematic limits on scholarship and to imagine more fruitful alternatives. The kind of historiography capable of handling a dialogical perspective on Atlantic-world Jewish history unmoored from an explicit or implicit Eurocentrism, on the one hand, and anti-Semitism, on the other, can readily be constructed from the bits and pieces washed up on the accessible shores of that history. The source material is not meager. I have presented but some of it, trying my best to read the

suggestive but fragmented narratives from many sides. I make no pretense of connecting the results of the text's microstudies into a linear entity – "Jewish Discourse About Blacks"; they stand rather as moments in the continual improvisation that makes up human life in communities, in this case among mostly Sephardic Jews and Africans of many backgrounds in the early modern temperate zones.

The topic of Jewish-Black relations arrives unhealthily but inescapably overdetermined. Perhaps this is what presses for use of the ironic mode. In his study of literary servants, a topic perhaps not surprisingly touching on and similar to my own, Bruce Robbins grappled with a closely related set of problems. His solution conveys a useful elegance:

If narratives about the organic unity of a given text, about an authorial career, or about a historical period can all be categorized as "close readings," then this narrative might be thought of as a distant reading. To be distant is to be peripheral, but distance also confers certain advantages. It permits self-consciousness about its own limited reach. It is a strength of this interpretation, for example, that the unequal power it assumes (the dominated could not speak fully or freely in the texts of the dominators) accounts for its own relatively thin and dispersed textual evidence. Distance also obviates the tempting confusion of interpreter with object of interpretation, forcing the interpreter to expose his or her separate, chosen standpoint. Unable to hide behind the authority of its object, my narrative must acknowledge that it is a narrative.³

It has become a scholarly cliché that Conversos and Sephardim represented harbingers of "modernity," both within Judaism and beyond it. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi saw in the former "the first considerable group of European Jews to have had their most extensive and direct personal experiences completely outside the organic Jewish community and the spiritual universe of normative Jewish tradition."⁴ The cultural commuting of the (ex-)Conversos, another continually cited modern feature, derived precisely from their contested "in-betweenness." For David Brion Davis, the Sephardim who joined in the creation of plantation slavery comprised "the most progressive elements and forces in Europe."⁵ Dutch Brazil served for some Jews as a laboratory, in which they learned whether a slave-driven agricultural industry could work and prove profitable.⁶ The positive results of this experiment can be tracked both in the movement of families from Brazil to Barbados or Surinam and in the series of *takanot* emanating from Amsterdam. The Curacaoan Jewish shipowners, captains, sailors, and privateers, never seen in Europe, became for Yerushalmi "emblematic of the many thrusts of modernity within the flow of tradition that characterized the Curacaoan community from its inception."⁷ These transatlantic merchant-adventurers hardly resemble the depiction given

by Cecil Roth, who maintained that the Jewish element was "inevitably . . . the active factor in the main before the fifteenth century and the passive one thereafter."⁸ Jewish Surinam stood as a model to emulate, a very plausible option for "resolving" the "Jewish question" of Europe for many Jews and non-Jews alike.

One sees in the histories of such communities the various negotiations of Jewish "color" under the pressures of colonialism. The culture of anti-Black racism affected segments of Jewish discourse just as it did Christian and Muslim discourse. One sees Jews contributing actively in limited arenas to the experiments in pigmentocratic social structuration. The system of plantation slavery and its cognates of pigmentocratic ideology and social organization effected changes in the practice of areas of Jewish law and communal administration in several territories within the Dutch colonial orbit: Amsterdam, Curaçao, Surinam. Cochin's trajectory – on which I have touched only briefly – was mostly parallel but independent, yet the anxieties of the Sephardic Atlantic were injected into its course as well. I have tried to show that Jewish slaveholding in the Americas bore few Jewish particularities; indeed, despite the fact that it was mostly a case of urban, bourgeois slavery, it comes across as identical phenomenologically in so many ways to slaveholding among surrounding non-Jews. While one might have expected Jews to have always behaved like Jews, an assumption that depends on the positing of a constant, homogeneous "Jewish tradition" or practice, the early modern history of Jewish slaveholding shows that the surrounding culture of slave owning proved far more influential; the constant, if any existed in the historical trajectory of the subculture of Jewish slaveholding, resided in the changing external cultures that Jewish slave owners shared.

The similarities between Jewish and Christian and Muslim discourse about Blacks extended to the discursive contours within each religious domain relative to demography and degree of involvement with slavery. East of the Atlantic slave system, Jewish discourse tended toward negative portrayal of Blacks and Blackness, yet for the most part, Blacks seem to have been treated without distinction from non-Jews of other ethnicities. In the Atlantic region, few Jews owned slaves, while relatively few non-Jews proportional to the total population owned slaves; very few Jews traded slaves and few members of the non-Jewish population traded slaves. Yet the Atlantic discourse regarding Blacks became overwhelmingly negative and pervasive. Hence, one finds by the eighteenth century generally denigrating images of Blacks in the Ashkenazic provenance of eastern Europe relatively untouched by Black slavery. As in the non-Jewish realm, within Jewish discourse the more removed one got from actual interaction with Blacks, the more statements regarding Blacks remained purely theoretical and limited to the reiteration of classical tropes.

At the same time, almost every distinction between Jewish and non-Jewish relations with slaves stems from factors that have little to do with "Jewishness," or, rather, the nature and meaning of "Jewishness" pose moving questions. Jewishness does not, of course, disappear as a factor when considering others, such as class. The anti-Jewish sentiments of Calvinist or Anglican planters was very real, but I have seen no evidence that Jews were precluded from becoming planters (in contrast to the case in the French colonies, which expelled the Jews in the seventeenth century). I am reminded of the response of a reviewer of a recent book on the Dutch Caribbean colonies:

I am puzzled by what is so Dutch about the "Dutch" Caribbean. . . . [The author] seems to be suggesting that proficiency in the Dutch language is a main operative faculty for the unity of Suriname's relatively separate communities with their distinctive histories. But he ultimately concludes that this criterion does not hold up. The individuality of the different communities comprises much more than a common language, a plural ethnic composition, and national feelings – the features that [the author] discusses. . . . [w]e also need to take into account strong family ties, religiosity, eating habits, artistic expression, and a culture of respect.⁹

Obviously, the Jews involved in the slave economy and culture were Jews religiously, socially, and experientially. Yet almost every existing difference between Jewish and non-Jewish discourse/behavior regarding slaves or Blacks can be attributed to class, occupation, or geography.¹⁰ Robert Cohen concluded that, for instance, the more moderate patterns of Sephardic concubinage with Black women had less to do with moral standards than with demographics, as the self-contained Sephardic community did not lack women the way non-Jewish European groups did.¹¹

In my exploration of textual Kushites, that is, ideology as explicit discourse, one would be hard-pressed to find much "ethnicity as lived experience" within Jewish discourse about Blacks, the reflections of intimate contact, commercial meditations, and the like.¹² It appears only in Jewish expressions from the colonies and the few lone voices of Jewish travelers, and even here it is for the most part rather curtailed. Despite the existence of a few Jewish communities possessing Black slaves, some of these communities to some degree or other based on Black labor, despite the nearly identical attitudinal/behavioral patterns between Jews and other Europeans regarding Blacks, Jewish discourse still manifested differences. Jewish textual discourse about Blacks and slaves in the early colonial world never became explicitly about "governability." Almost without exception, Jewish statements lacked the assumption of authorial belonging to the group involved in the creation and maintenance of "the Black problem" found consistently in the modalities of self-presentation of Christian slave traders, traveler writers, or abolitionists.

From this finding of a relatively ubiquitous flow of racial discourse across the domains of religious cultures, however, I draw the opposite conclusion than do the many scholars with whom I agree up to this point. They seek in the absence of Jewish particularities, in the allegedly ameliorationist guidance of *halakha*, ultimately to locate Jewish behavior vis-à-vis slaves on external factors, while still maintaining, sometimes implicitly and sometimes explicitly, the existence of an intuited higher Jewish moral sensitivity. As Robert Cohen put it: "[E]nvironmental factors completely negated all possible impact norms may have had upon Jewish behavior."¹³ Jews, in this view, behaved toward their slaves like Jews when for the better, but like non-Jews when for the worse.

The relative Jewish discursive silence regarding Blacks cannot be read as an implicit moral reluctance to speak ill. At its best, the silence reflects one of the strong points of Judaism's historical self-involvement, the restraining of impulses to intervene in other peoples' lives.¹⁴ Such a restraint, if indeed operative, would seem to function mostly on the utopian level of the text, Judaism's *langue*; I am reluctant, in any event, to impute it to Jews (or any other group) as human beings in the everyday sociopolitical arena (Judaism's *parole*, as it were), especially in the absence of restrictive conditions preventing their full participation in society.

Yet it remains difficult to read the terrain of Jewish discourse in relation to social interactions between Jews and Blacks. Even into the eighteenth century, the Atlantic slave system does not seem to have inspired much change in the most "traditional" segment of Jewish discourse, Hebrew-language sources, perhaps most surprisingly, around the curse of Ham. This trope, and all of Hebrew-language discourse regarding Blacks, remained relatively static, limited to a few recurrent topoi, throughout the period under investigation.

Jewish discourse contained too little anti-Black sentiment to justify any kind of isolation as particular. Taken as a cultural unit, Jewish anti-Blackness was not at all widespread, intense, elaborated, or vicious, these being relative terms, of course. Jewish discourse presented little sustained interest in Blacks. Jewish statements regarding Blacks and Blackness make a set far more limited in detail, scope, vehemence, intimacy, or psychological complexity when compared to "Christian" sources. As far as I have found, no Jewish equivalent competes with Alonso Sandoval's hundreds of pages of ethnographic attention to Black Africans in his *Naturaleza, policia sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catecismo evangélico de todos etiopes* (Seville, 1627), or with the poem appearing in the midst of the second edition of Bryan Edwards's history of the British West Indies, "Ode to the Sable Venus," in puerile obsessing over the sexuality of Black women, or with the Code Noir in the totalizing neurosis behind its administrative surgery on the body politic.¹⁵

On the level of governance of Blacks, again, one finds nearly identical patterns between the Jewish and non-Jewish domains, even if the former were far

fewer and far less plantation oriented. The tensions internal to Jewish communities over the inclusion or exclusion of slaves mirrored the internal tensions of the surrounding environment: Upper classes and rabbis generally favored exclusiveness; laypeople generally favored inclusiveness. Several small Jewish communities developed organizational structures based on the exclusion of non-White Jews. In all places other than Cochin – that is, within the Atlantic slave economies – the labor of the excluded Jews was exploited by the Whites Jews in the community. Obviously, the specifics of the exclusions revolved around communal structure and Jewish practice, but the content and formal shape of the exclusions and their dynamic of implementation consisted of the local variety (except for Sephardic Amsterdam, which actually fit typologically into the Iberian colonial orbit).

Documentation of specific anti-Jewish animus on the part of Blacks can barely be found. Not once have I come across a statement by a Black in the Americas pointing out Jews as slave owners or slave traders, much less owners harsher than Christians. Not one of the eighteenth-century former slave writers so much as mentioned Jews in connection with slavery, not even Ottobah Cugoana's systemic critique of slavery. It is hard to overlook the fact that *nowhere* in the entire corpus of Surinamese Maroon oral histories collected by anthropologist Richard Price – many of which treat Jewish plantation owners – does there exist animosity against Jews *as Jews*; throughout they are seen subsumed into the category of White people.¹⁶ Given the great motivation many Blacks would have had for expressing anti-Jewish prejudice and the existence, if not encouragement, of such prejudice among Christian Whites, the lack of Black anti-Jewish prejudice cannot be underplayed; it attests to the unremarkable nature of Jewish conduct within the slave economy.

At the same time, Jewish discourse contained too much anti-Black sentiment for (Jewish) scholars to argue it away. The manner in which this is done illuminates the tug of ideological scripts. The few but clear statements marking Blackness as irredeemably, essentially different, primitive, enslavable – statements uttered by rabbis whose opinions otherwise attract extensive scholarly devotion – become transformed into a mere statistical nonentity. Flattened out in this scholarly overlooking is the power differential belonging to the producers of these texts, who were sometimes economically elite but, perhaps more importantly, usually in control of the circulation of symbolic capital (though significantly less so in the Atlantic world), and whose cultural productions gained widespread support and admiration. Rashi, Abravanel, Jacob Huli, for example, differed greatly from one another in many ways in terms of their connection to the Jewish and non-Jewish elites of their day and their connections, if any, to slave labor. Under the sign of a different narrative, however, that of forgers of Jewish literature, their contribution receives a far greater evaluation.

The taking on of Judaism by a few Blacks, or Jewish affinities among small groups of Blacks or mulattos, is often held up as proof of the kindness of Jewish masters. Too little information exists about the handful of Black and mulatto Judaizers in Iberian territories to adequately characterize their reception in what passed for crypto-Jewish communities. They seem to have faced no barriers. In nearly every other significant concentration of Black or mulatto Jews, they faced collective discrimination, erasure, with or without *halakhic* worries. At the same time, individual Blacks and mulattos clearly found a reception within various Jewish communities. But if a bond existed between Blacks and the Jewish culture of their (former) masters, what was its source? Did it stem from the moral and loving atmosphere of Jewish homes or from an inevitable sociological process of the coerced intimacy of the master-slave relationship?¹⁷ Jewish scholars since the nineteenth century have lovingly recounted aspects of the stories of these Black and mulatto Jews. But this exaggerated emphasis on the very few slaves in the Americas who fully took on their masters' religion and identification ignored the vast majority who did not.

In treating the paths of textual Blacks in early modern Jewish history, I turn again to the insightful stance of Bruce Robbins: "I am ready to grant that I have not been talking about what is necessarily most complex, sophisticated, profound, or even interesting" in Jewish thought. "But I cannot help but wonder about the cost of ignoring, in our sophistication and profundity, the claim of these [instances of unsatisfied community] hidden away in the margins of our canonical texts. It would be easier to argue that this claim has been superseded if it could be shown that it has been satisfied."¹⁸

Were Jews as a whole equivalent to an order of clergy? A whole subgenre of studies might be sifted to evaluate the cruelty or humaneness of Muslim or Christian clergy and Jews.¹⁹ Despite the relative pervasiveness of *halakha* in the life of even eighteenth-century Jews, the community as a whole can hardly be compared to a guild of clergy. Belief in the chosenness of the Jews notwithstanding, Jews evince no statistical superiority in moral behavior over members of other religions. The Dutch commander of the short-lived colony in the Essequibo region of Guiana complained in a 1663 letter: "I am here in the midst of a heap of unruly, wanton and reckless people, excepting always the pious who are very few in number, both among the Christians and Jews."²⁰ In any case, one should not expect more from a persecuted, pressured minority. The papacy condemned the slave trade only intermittently and without taking any concrete measures to counteract it.²¹ As David Brion Davis has written, "From the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, . . . the African slave trade was sanctioned by international law as well as by the highest clerical and temporal authorities in Catholic and Protestant states alike."²² If Jews are said to be so benign toward their slaves,

on what basis? It is doubtful that the few Jewish or crypto-Jewish slave traders functioned any differently from their non-Jewish competitors, for instance. One of the slaving voyages cosponsored around 1700 by the Curacaoan Sephardi Philippe Henríquez/Jahacob Senior, the only Jew to import slaves under West India Company authorization (on his own ship), lost 205 of the 664 slaves on board.²³ No particular beneficence had moved this Sephardic captain to deviate from the industry's standard operating procedure of cramming the human cargo into the holds as tightly as possible.

It is not enough, then, to say that the Sephardic Jews who held slaves were religious or observant of *halakha*. As I have tried to show, the range of Jewish discourses, as with any enormous, long-standing cultural complex, empowered both pro- and antislavery positions, both sympathetic and hostile attitudes toward Blacks. Even internal to any religious community, one finds from individual to individual a wide variety of beliefs, levels of practice, knowledge, explanations for belief, attitudes toward the collective. The fields and subfields of the community's corpus of law, philosophy, worship, and folklore undergo changes at different rates, subject to varying kinds of external and internal forces.

The context of the abandonment of ritual Judaism and its "medieval" social structure surely provided the armature for the increasingly secular treatment of slaves in the Americas. Todd M. Endelman discussed "radical assimilation" in modern English Jewish history, those who either converted to Christianity (sincerely or for secular, opportunistic reasons) or "drifted away from the community through indifference and intermarriage."²⁴ Yosef Kaplan noted that in Amsterdam communal ordinances rarely touched on economic matters despite the fact that many Jews there were involved with matters of credit, lending and borrowing monies from banks, and international trade. A Sephardic thinker such as Joseph Penso de la Vega could write an entire commentary on the world of finance, *Confusión de Confusiones* (1688), not only without mentioning *halakhic* issues but also without referring once to anything Jewish: In these cases "Economics seems to lie beyond the framework of Judaism."²⁵ But these general processes of acculturation should not be used to establish a distinction between a Jewish theological discourse and a lay discourse, in which the former remained purely theoretical while the latter reflected what Jews actually said and did.

Regarding the domain of slavery, *halakha* and custom, by the time of their arrival in the eighteenth-century Caribbean, had been quietly and conveniently allowed away, melded into civil norms, with the significant exception of allowing slaves to keep the Jewish Sabbath. This lofty moral principle, though of course circumscribed if undeniable ramifications for the slave, proved more immune to the pressures pushing for the elimination of ceremonies and practices that made Jews appear different and backward. *Halakhic* slave law in its maximal,

inclusive version, on the other hand, probably appeared positively medieval in its ceremonial aspects to Jews desperate to prove their modernity; it presumed and demanded familial attitudes no longer suitable for modern, industrial slavery, with such seemingly absolute Others as slaves, and it posed huge inconveniences to the cold calculation seemingly necessary for the profitable use of slaves. Most importantly, perhaps, in determining the dynamics of Jewish Whiteness, the opportunities afforded Sephardic Jews in the overseas colonies marked one of the first real such openings for Jewish participation in the economy and society of Western Europe since the end of the fifteenth century.

On another plane, the more or less fragmented, layered, contradictory, situational nature of individual identity, even if it is ultimately unitary, has long been convincingly argued by proponents in many academic disciplines.²⁶ Columbia University philosopher Akeel Bilgrami brought forth himself as an example. While traveling in a staunchly Hindu neighborhood in India, he was asked by a potential landlord in an interview what his religion was. "I heard the words 'I am a Muslim' on my lips," he wrote, an announcement of identity enunciated in and for the moment, contextualized by India's divisive religious politics:

It hardly seemed to matter that I found Islamic theological doctrine wholly non-credible, that I had grown up in a home dominated by the views of an irreligious father, and that I had then for some years adopted the customary aggressive secular stance of those with communist leanings. It still seemed the only self-respecting thing to say in that context.²⁷

Faced with the specter not of an inquisitive but easily avoided landlord but an all-powerful Inquisitional network and society, the Conversos and their descendant New Christians – who in turn became a significant sector of the Western Sephardic diaspora – developed even more permanently fractured, situationally negotiated identities. Who is to say which aspects of the personal religion constructed as a bricolage on the individual level from the discursive bricolage available to the collective must mesh with which other aspects? Claude Lévi-Strauss called every culture "the result of a mishmash."²⁸ The "in-between" cultural and religious bricolage of the ex-Conversos has been highlighted by many scholars. Or, as Clifford Geertz put it, "no one, not even a saint, lives in the world religious symbols formulate all of the time, and the majority of men live in it only at moments."²⁹ This is not a statement about moral excellence but about the existence of different domains within self-identity and mobility between them, about the different faces of the outside world penetrating the personal inside. I have not even approached the issue of the attitudes of Jewish slave owners toward their own possession of slaves (the sources I have found so far do not enable such a project), which probably also ranged, as it did for Christian slave owners, from zealous belief in the improvement bestowed on

slaves by their enslavement to cynicism about such gifts but unwillingness to abandon a certain income or status, and a host of other stances. Belief in the legitimacy of slavery, in any case, did not necessarily logically contradict many of the tenets of Jewish (or Christian or Muslim) dogma nor Judaism's customary beliefs, its historical models, or blueprints for social organization. After the late eighteenth century, it became more and more prevalent to think that slavery contradicted the moral goals of all of the monotheisms (for the better, I think), but such trends manifest the tides of social reasoning, not universal logic.

For some Jews, the newly available source of Black "pagans" afforded an attractive opportunity to possess the kind of servile labor force or status symbol whose acquisition was so constricted for Jews in Christian (and Muslim) regions. Furthermore, many Jews probably believed Jews to be deserving of a life free of worldly toil, a foretaste and instantiation of the afterlife, perhaps particularly as compensation for the oppressive history Jews suffered. In this light, as unpolitically correct as it might appear to us now, the *de facto* rule of several Caribbean Jewish communities over populations of Blacks in some cases far larger than their own numbers stands as a historically unique dismantling of Jewish powerlessness. Not only did Jewish "official" discourse not see this as a problem, but many Jews and some non-Jews, circumscribed by their Eurocentrism, lauded it as an excellent means of generating Jewish productivity and civic accomplishment.

It is most unfortunate that Orlando Patterson's insightful understanding of slavery as parasitism carries overtones of the term so often hurled at Jews historically. Yet the narratives of Jews and Blacks in the early colonial world merely show that Jews, themselves parasitically marginalized/maintained as a group under Christianity and Islam, produced those capable of parasitizing Blacks, another group marginalized/maintained by the dominant majorities. While the Jews within Christendom were, "as in theodicy, a reminder of injustice in a system that is supposed to have been wholly good," Blacks are likewise a reminder of injustice within the supposedly wholly good system of the Jewish minority's culture.³⁰ This is a harsh truth, but anthropologist Sherry Ortner rightly pointed out that the "impulse to sanitize the internal politics of the dominated must be understood as fundamentally romantic."³¹ As a historical (but not innate) phenomenon, Jewish anti-Blackness was very real in the Atlantic world. Even more, the power of the Atlantic slave trade and culture of slavery effected changes within elements of Western Jewish culture, including to applied halakha. In harnessing these powers, some Jews believed they had discovered an antidote to their own exclusion, a tincture to ensure their own Whiteness. Many forces obviously contributed to these changes in Jewish culture, and the influence of the Atlantic slave system and its racism should not be overplayed, but neither should they be ignored.

APPENDIX I

Names of Slaves Belonging to Sephardic Jews of Barbados (Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)

Adults

Abba - 2 (women)	Isabella	Old Katy
Anthony	Ishmael	Peggy - 6
Antonio	Jack - 2	Phillis - 3
August	Jenny	Primus - 2
Bella	Joe	Punch
Bessy	John	Purim
Betty	Johnny - 2	Quasheba
Boss	Juana	(or variant) - 3
Bristol	Jubah	Robin
Casander	Katy Casander	Rose - 2
Clarina	Lilly	Ruth
Consciencia	London	Sammy
Cudjoe	Macaco	Santo
Cuffy	Mall	Sarah
Diana - 2	Mally	Scipio
Doegood	Manuel	Tom
Entitta	Maria Ibo	Valenty
Esperansa - 5	Mariba	Ventur
Esperanto	Mary - 3	Violet
February	Muiga	Warwick
Franky	Nanny	William Boyes
Gracy	Obbah	Zabelina
Hagar - 2	Old Flora	

Children with "Jewish" Names

Bashe	Esperansa	Purim
Cain	Evare	Simon
Debora	Hannah	

Source: Bertram Wallace Korn, "Barbadian Jewish Wills"; Wilfred S. Samuel, "Jewish Colonists."

APPENDIX 2

Names of Slaves Belonging to Sephardic Jews of Jamaica
(Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)

Adults

Addah	Esperanca	Molly
Bella	Fanny	Nanny
Bess	Harriott	Quasheba
Bretenia	Ismael	Quasi
Capander	Mimba	Princess

Children

Adam - 2	Elliss	Nancy
Ailey	Francisco	Phibbah
B.py (?)	Hanah	Richmond
Betty Crab	Jack	Sucky
David	Johnny	Venus

Sources: Jamaican last wills and testaments, AJA: Solomon DeLeon, 1696 (SC-2813); Jacob Rodrigues deLeon, 13 July 1703 (SC-2759); Abraham Cohen deLeon, 24 March 1708 (SC-2747); Benjamin Pereira, 20 May 1723 (SC-9520); Abraham Henriques, 27 October 1729 (SC-4910); Joseph Delyon, 11 November 1730 (SC-2820); Moses Lopez, 25 June 1731 (SC-13552); Lebanah Delyon, 1747 (SC-2775); Angeli DaCosta DeAndrade, 19 May 1748 (SC-2707); David Henriques, 17 April 1766 (SC-4912); David DaCastro, 12 March 1767 (SC-2714); Solomon Abrahams, 29 January 1772 (SC-13478); Rachel Delyon, 1778 (SC-2775); Jacob Abrahams, 9 September 1778 (SC-13478); Samuel Aflalo, 5 November 1779 (SC-13478).

APPENDIX 3

Names of Slaves Belonging to Sephardic Jews of Surinam (Eighteenth Century)

In reproducing the following lists, I have retained as much as possible the original layout, punctuation, and spelling. Because these differed from one source to another, and from one notary/scribe to another, inconsistencies will be frequent. Where slave occupations/skills or descriptions are recorded, the word "Idem" appears if the occupation/skill/description is identical to that of the previous entry. Brackets indicate an item that is partially illegible.

Plantation Nieuwe Staer

Men

- 1: Mante offiseer
- 2: Primeiro dram Stylder
- 3: Apia Syker Kooker + delver
- 4: Musinga Delver
- 5: Quasy Idem
- 6: Quiqué Idem
- 7: Coffie Idem
- 8: Liandro Idem
- 9: Coridon Delver
- 10: Arlenquem [?] Idem
- 11: Francisco Idem
- 12: Ando
- 13: Cotia Delver
- 14: Babin Sikelyk
- 15: sarlo [?]
- 16: Mane

- 17: Tanquy
- 18: Doglis
- 19: Basso Timmerman
- 20: Bende Idem
- 21: Ezy Idem
- 22: Gabriel Smeyer +
leert Timmere
- 23: Fortuyn Kuyper

Women

- 1: Susana
- 2: Masanga
- 3: Ajuba
- 4: Kato
- 5: Sesilia

Appendix 3. Names of Slaves in Surinam

- 6: Amina
- 7: Esperansa
- 8: Amuba [?]
- 9: Anikia [?]
- 10: Luna
- 11: Maria
- 12: Rozelina
- 13: Ajuba Cormantyn
- 14: Pomba
- 15: Dora
- 16: Blanca
- 17: Andreza
- 18: Jacoba
- 19: Marigo [?]
- 20: quibinda Huysmeyd
- 21: Sery Idem
- 22: Bety Kokin
- 23: Mariana
- 24: Roza malatin Brayster +
Nayster [?]
- 25: Suanica [?] doctresse
- 26: Amba oud
- 27: Afiba
- 28: Merie

Black Boys

- 1: Jaquy
- 2: quasy
- 3: Dikie
- 4: Jaquy

Girls

- 1: Judie
- 2: Merie
- 3: Maca
- 4: Bes

Mulattos

- 1: Isaq malat onder de Heer D^d Pinto.
- 2: Dikie malat zoon van Pomba
met De Jaas [?]
- 3: Dikie malat zoon van Mariana

Slaves Belonging to Raphael and Grasia de Britto

Slaves

- 1: Joost officier
- 2: Quaxy Idem
- 3: Artoes [?] d^o
- 4: Mars
- 5: Glomba
- 6: Mane
- 7: Adam
- 8: Dogles
- 9: Ventura
- 10: Avanso
- 11: Fortoin

- 12: Ventura choco
- 13: Andre
- 14: arlenquin
- 15: quana
- 16: primeiro Grande
- 17: Coridon
- 18: klein primeiro
- 19: Linse [?]
- 20: Geluk
- 21: Daniel met de Jas
- 22: purim

- 23: Jaky Criol
24: Kuaxy kormantein ko[?] pasfer [?]
25: Trankil
26: Moso
27: January

Women

- 1: bety met een Seer been [?]
2: quasyiba
3: Jacoba choco
4: Ajuba abo
5: Jacoba mena
6: ajuba kormantein
7: fortuna
8: Lucrey
9: aLuba [?] met een Seer been
10: Sarafina om beksraem [?]
11: Beatris
12: Florinda om bekwaem [?]

Boys

- 1: Diky
2: Savana
3: Cuamina

*Smalhalde Plantation**Men Slaves*

- 1: hans officier
2: Vortuyn Siekelyk [?]
3: Annibal Timmerman
4: Jupiter ditto
5: Annibal Coromatyn Siekelyk
6: David inbekwaam
7: koes delver
8: Pieter delver
9: Primier onbekwaam

- 4: Reuben
5: pequin dogles met de Jas

Girls

- 1: Juba
2: francisca om bekwaem
3: Esperansa
4: Dorotea
5: Buanga

Women at Param^{bo}

- 1: Mary malatin
2: Jacoba koquein
3: Laurinha Idem
4: Catro
5: Coco
6: Murtinha
7: Clarinha

Boys

- 1: Andre Leer timmer
2: Daniel Malat
3: Simha malatin

- 10: Massie delver
11: Son Timmerman
12: Pitje [?] mer een Seer been
13: Jonas [?] delver
14: Cojo delver
15: Erkules ditto
16: Aúgustus ditto
17: Jasmyn ditto
18: Vransje oud & inbequaam

- 19: Askan [?] idem
20: Byman id^m
21: April [?]
22: Vintura gek
23: Alert

Women

- 1: Cato v [?]
2: Sorvias oud en onbekwaam
3: diana
4: flora
5: betie
6: mariana
7: Catrina
8: Clara
9: Abena oud en afgeleeft [?]
10: Afiba
11: Anserica [?]
12: Elisabet
13: Clara hous
14: maria
15: Susana Sowange [?]
16: Ajúba

*Descanso Plantation**Men*

- 1: Banga officier
2: Rieke [?] ditto
3: xarlo [?] Timmerman
4: Siro Idem
5: KlynSirro Idem
6: Kobina Smit
7: Amsesoe [?] Idem
8: Gran Trink [?] Cúyper met den Feistel [?]
9: Sosoe Idem
10: Quaxy Idem
11: Foso [?] mets Saare

- 17: dido
18: Condassie
19: Pandora
20: Latona malenke
21: Aúroora Siek
22: Penelope
23: Mimea Swange [?]

Girls

- 1: Acúba
2: Severie [?]
3: Ketie
4: Amaranta
5: Anna met een Seer been
6: Esperansa
7: dina
8: grietje [?]
9: July
10: Aúroora
11: flora
12: Anselika
13: Afrika

- 12: Klyne Trink delver
13: dosoe
14: AWarra delver
15: Abril buyler Idem
16: Inquí Idem
17: Aba Idem
18: BrieSies [?] ombekwaam
19: orlando delver
20: Trobal [?] Idem
21: Jeremel [?] Idem
22: xander búyler Idem súd
23: Glandie

- 24: Lankoer [?] oud en afgeleeft
- 25: marte búyler + delver
- 26: Fredrik Idem
- 27: Ando Idem
- 28: Kúacú Idem
- 29: Cojo Idem op Comando
- 30: Warrie
- 31: Karo van dosoe Idem
- 32: Valentyn Idem
- 33: Bossoe Idem
- 34: Masse
- 35: búazyombekwand
- 36: Jacob molat Prúyk maaker
- 37: dikkie
- 38: Mingo
- 39: Wil
- 40: Trbo [?]
- 41: Qúike
- 42: Eliezer
- 43: Brickier
- 44: rilo [?]
- 45: Longao bl[?]en
- 46: Valentyn Timmerman met
Een percl [?] in 't org
- 47: Cúacú
- 48: Tanquí oúd

Women

- 1: Bes [?]
- 2: Isabela
- 3: Minga
- 4: Etie [?]
- 5: Dafina ombekwaam
- 6: Anica
- 7: Esperansa ombekwaam
- 8: Oco
- 9: Grandion [?]
- 10: Maúrie sikelyk
- 11: Merie
- 12: Búanga

- 13: Amerensy ombekwaam
- 14: Gran Minga
- 15: Kúmba grande
- 16: Jansra
- 17: Amba
- 18: Fudinha [?]
- 19: Lamarda
- 20: Blak Koko
- 21: Kúmba
- 22: Acúba
- 23: Diana
- 24: Bettie
- 25: Súsana
- 26: Floresida
- 27: Jon [?]
- 28: Minga de Cúacoe [?]
- 29: Minga de Jak
- 30: Kwin [?]
- 31: Júdy
- 32: Laúrinka [?]
- 33: Gracia
- 34: Roza
- 35: Betie grande oud +
bl[rest illegible]

- 36: brinka
- 37: Beby
- 38: Nana
- 39: Lúcesia
- 40: Flora
- 41: Maca
- 42: Fransisca oud + bleund [?]
- 43: Bossy [?] Idem
- 44: Orico, oud + blaend [?]
- 45: Maria

Boys

- 1: Vintura
- 2: Ezy
- 3: Coffie
- 4: David molat

- 5: Vinturinka
- 6: Télon [?]
- 7: Kidosie [?]
- 8: Qúipido
- 9: Wil
- 10: Qúaxy
- 11: Coffie Valentyn
- 12: dosoe
- 13: Cúase [?]
- 14: Jacob Okkó
- 15: Bapa [?]
- 16: Paúlús molat
- 17: Adrian
- 18: Linsie van Aninka

*Rama Plantation**Men*

- 1: Abram, molat Timmerman
- 2: Vintura Tim': Kriol
- 3: quansa Leere Timere Idem
- 4: Coffie Idem ditto
- 5: Manjo Sager Kuyper + Buyler
Kriol
- 6: Awara Lager Kriol
- 7: Panjo
- 8: Eeze
- 9: Delfin
- 10: Coffie Kormantyn, out,
kost wagter
- 11: Coffie ombequaam + van geene
Waard
- 12: Kobina, weg geloope deets [?]
2 [?] Jaar

Black Women

- 1: Bokie kriolin, kokinne
- 2: Hanatje malatin, Naayster [?]
- 3: aquasue naayster kriolin

Girls

- 1: Izabelinha
- 2: Aninka
- 3: Trowe [?]
- 4: Fortúna
- 5: Afiba
- 6: Loerasie [?]
- 7: Estela
- 8: Jacoba
- 9: Masse de Kwin
- 10: Hanatjies malateyn

- 4: Mariana molatin nayster en
brayster
- 5: Ajúba Huysmeyd
- 7: Afiba beek
- 8: Lucesia kriolin
- 9: Ana Tobo
- 10: Anika Kriolin
- 11: Affie Idem
- 12: Serafina Idem
- 13: Ajuasie Kriolin
- 14: Piquín Maem Idem
- 15: Akúbaldem
- 16: Ana
- 17: Roza oud van geene Waard
- 18: Afiba Kriolin
- 19: Abena Idem

Boys

- 1: Klaas Kriool
- 2: Apollo Idem
- 3: Isaq Malat

- 4: David Idem
- 5: Simon Kriol
- 6: Joost

Girls

- 1: bakie

Ladelejansa Plantation

Negros

- 1: Quansa Feitor
- 2: Maandag Carpinteiro
- 3: Abanco Serador
- 4: xander Idem
- 5: Boosman Idem
- 6: Affo Idem
- 7: Prins
- 8: kadet
- 9: Domingo

Negras

- 1: Gerra [?]
- 2: Abena
- 3: Acúba
- 4: Amba doente
- 5: Amenta
- 6: Laura
- 7: Beby
- 8: chape Imeapas [?]
- 9: Dorinda doente
- 10: Abena Criola
- 11: ACuasy Doente
- 12: Nany Idem
- 13: Judy

Dotan Plantation

Blacks

- 1: Izak molato alfayate [?]
- 2: Francisco velho

- 2: Acúba
- 3: Roza molatin
- 4: Mariana Idem
- 5: Jael Idem 3: Jaar oud
- 6: Eva
- 7: Serafina

House Women

- 14: quibinda Castureiras
- 15: Ajúba
- 16: Affy
- 17: Mery

Boys

- 1: Tanquy de quibinda
- 2: Tanquy de Prins
- 3: Coffie doente + Incapas
- 4: Basso
- 5: quansa
- 6: Tanquy de Abena
- 7: Dassy
- 8: Pieter

Girls

- 1: Eva de quebinda
- 2: Anica
- 3: Amimba
- 4: Izabelinha com faiba no Pé [?]
- 6: [sic] Buanga de Mama de chape
- 7: Judy doente
- 8: Aninha

- 3: Piquin Pay Dotan [?] Serrador
- 4: Piquien Pay Labadistas Idem

- 5: Donho [?] Idem
- 6: quácu Idem
- 7: Espadilha Idem
- 8: Cúna Idem
- 9: Dada
- 10: Jona
- 11: Baltezar
- 12: Cojo, Pastor

Black Women

- 1: Serafina Tonne [?]
- 2: Serafina velha Impedida
- 3: Andia Idem
- 4: quibinda Idem

Slaves of David Pinto, Tulpenburg Plantation

Black Men

- 1: Bien Paye Feytor
- 2: Fortuyn Serador + Trinchador
- 3: Avanso Id^m
- 4: Jaquí Trinchador
- 5: Fortuyn britto
- 6: quípido
- 7: Jason
- 8: Múzinga
- 9: Mariana
- 10: Makaya
- 11: Pita [?]
- 12: Longao
- 13: Cadet

Black Women

- 1: Clara Cozinheyra + Lavandeyra
- 2: Múrta Id^m
- 3: Serafina doytora

- 5: Lucrecia
- 6: Swanlhie [?]
- 7: Bes
- 8: Amimba
- 9: agar
- 10: amba

Boys

- 1: Andre
- 2: manilha

Girl

- 1: afiba

- 4: Constancia
- 5: Merenho
- 6: Aninha
- 7: Catro
- 8: Roza
- 9: Beby
- 10: Caterina
- 11: Lúna
- 12: Fortúna
- 13: Fatima
- 14: Fransisca
- 15: Laúrinha
- 16: Catje
- 17: Amba
- 18: Aninha Com sua Cria Rezem
nacido
- 19: Prinses Com chaga
- 20: Cocó
- 21: Esperansa
- 22: Tamera

- 23: Betty
24: Catto
25: Masanga

Boys

- 1: Galand
2: Larjand [?]
3: quamina
4: Prins
5: Jaquí
6: Jaquí de Serafina
7: Titos
8: Primeyro

*Horeb Plantation**Men*

- 1: Occoro [illegible words]
Kanter & delver [?]
2: Tonj Criol + Timmerman
3: Jan - Idem d° Claeger [?]
Kanter + delver
4: Acharie [?], Criol, Laeger
Kanter [?]
5: quassie Cormanten - Idem -
6: Alba Criol Idem
7: Ismael d° Idem
8: Samson d° Idem
9: Pieter Idem

Women

- 1: Dina, Huysmeid
2: Abina, criolin - kokin
3: Lindinga wastes [?]
4: Amimba - Huysmeid
5: fortuna criolin Na[?]ister
6: Luzia [?]
7: L[illegible] Cormantin

Girls

- 1: Eva
2: Diana
3: Catarina
4: Acúba
5: Amimba
6: Lúna

Múlatos

- 1: Reúben

Molatas

- 1: Mayana

- 8: Pequse [?] ... d°
9: Luzia d°
10: Rozelina [?], Criolin
11: Adjuba
12: Judie
13: Luzia
14: Beatrys
15: Jien [?]

Boys

- 1: Coffy Criol
2: Buter [?] d°
3: Pieter d°
4: Dossoe, mulat
5: Daniel - d°

Girls

- 1: quetie, croilin [illegible]
2: Zabetinja [?], d° - Idem
3: Ganaba [?], d°

*Venetia Nova Plantation**Men*

- 1: Cúasy offisier
2: Tony Timmerman
3: Christian Molat leere Timmer
4: Pieter Delver
5: Marquis Id^m Criol
6: Tony Id^m ditto
7: Frans ditto
8: Bastiaō ... ditto
9: Coffy malenker cost wagter

- 10: Coco Idem
11: Furtúna Idem
12: Aninha Idem
13: Acaba Idem Naayster [?]
14: Tina [?] Idem waster
15: Diana kokin
16: Luna Criolin Doctresse

Boys

- 1: Dosú criol
2: Sabo Idem

Women

- 1: Seráfina
2: Jasinta
3: Swantje
4: Abena
5: Vitoria
6: Luisa
7: Beatris Criolin
8: Ambinha Idem
9: Pomba Idem

Girls

- 1: Roza malatin
2: Agar criolin
3: Anecal [?] Idem
4: Serafina Idem
5: Luna Idem
6: Sery [?] Idem
7: Amimba Idem

Sources: Inventares & Prisatie van de Plantaje Nieuwe staer, 3-5 May 1763 (Records of Jurators of Surinam, fols. 17-20, microfilm reel 67a, AJA); Invent: + Priseratie van de Grond geleegeen buyte Paramaribo toebehooren [?] Jarvent: de Heer Raphael de Britto, 15 May 1763 (ibid., fols. 46-49); Inventaris van de Plantage Smalhalde, 26-27 June 1763 (ibid., fols. 103-5); Inventaris van de Plantage Descanso, 1763 (ibid., fols. 128-33); Inventaris Van de Plant Rama, 29-30 August 1763 (ibid., fols. 166-71); Inventario do Plantaje Ladelejansa, September 1763 (ibid., fols. 174-76); Inventario do Plant Doran, 4 October 1763 (ibid., 190-91); Inventario + Avalúasao do estado do Búdel do Bemaventurado David Pintto, 1764 (ibid., fols. 371-73); Inventaris & Prisatie van de Plantage Horeb, 1766 (?) (ibid., fols. 428-30); Inventaris en Prizatie van de Plantage Venetia Nova, 9 September 1766 (ibid., fols. 507-8).

APPENDIX 4

Names of Slaves Belonging to Sephardic Jews of Curaçao (Eighteenth Century)

Men

Acara	Jacob Fransisco
Adam (alias Anthony Parrera)	Jacobus
Adriaan	Jacobus Rondonde
Andrees Goosé	Jan
Andries	Jan Isaak
Antonio	Jan Sterling
Anthony - 4	Jean
Anthony Poyo	Jean Baptiste
Anthony Timmerman	Jean Pierre
Bastiaan	Johannes - 4
Bentura - 2	Johannes Jacobus
Bernaldo	Joseph
Bogon	Juan
Claas - 2	Juan Alonso
Claasje	Juan Anthony - 3
Codjo (alias Juan Domingo)	Juan Domingo - 5
Eustache	Juan Francisco - 3
Flores	Juan Francisco Mina
Francisco	Juan Gosé
Gaspaar Anthony	Juan Hozé Ale
Guan	Juan Laguna
Guan de Larosa Quakoe	Juan Louis
Guillermo	Juan Manuel
Hendrik	Juan Pedro - 5
Heronimo	Juan Thomas
Hipolité	Juaniko

Appendix 4. Names of Slaves in Curaçao

319

Juantje
Julien - 2
Lodrigo
Louis
Louis Gaspar
Louis Timmerman
Manuel - 2
Manuel Augustin
Manuel Fransisco
Manuel Gabriel
Manuel Santje
Martes
Mattheuw
Matthias
Mingeel

Women

Abba
Achuba
Acoeba
Adelaide
Agie
Agnietje
Andrea
Andrea Francisca
Angelica Niny
Angelita
Anna - 15
Anna Catharina - 2
Anna Cat[h]rijn - 2
Anna Christina - 2
Anna Esperansa
Anna Francisca - 2
Anna Maria - 7
Anna Maria (alias Luna)
Anna Maria Francisca
Anna Maria Gosepa
Anna Maria Groseba
Anna Oliana
Anna Phelipa

Mingon
Nicolaas - 2
Nicolaas Ferdinandus
Paul (alias Allerte Criool)
Philip
Philip Corpus
Philipo St. Jago
Pierre
Pierre Louis
Pieter
Prinsje
Simon Felix
St. Bastiaan Francisco
Tieko (or Juan Fransisco)
Tjekoe

Anna Sophia
Anna Thina - 3
An[n]ica - 8
Annica Duro
Annika - 2
Anthonettje - 7
Anthonica - 2
Antje - 2
Antonetta
Asinta
Assienta
Barbe
Belinda
Bettje - 2
Bibie
Bibiana
Bitoria
Carolina - 2
Cat[h]alina - 3
Catharina - 5
Catharina Anthonia
Catharina Augustina
Catharina Francisca - 2

Cat[h]rijntje - 5
 Cato
 Catrijntje van Maria Gueda
 Catrina - 2
 Cecilia Anthonia
 Celina
 Christientje
 Christina - 3
 Ciciel
 Cicilia - 7
 Cicilia (alias Dianora Beeldsnijder)
 Cicilia Catharina
 Clara - 4
 Clara Augustin
 Clara Augustina (alias Claesa)
 Constantie
 Dianora - 3
 Doeminga
 Dominga - 10
 Dominga Francisca
 Dominga Fransisca
 Domingo Firmo
 Doort[h]é - 3
 Dorothea - 13
 Dorothea Francisca
 Egenia
 Elizabeth - 2
 Esperanca - 2
 Esperance
 Esperansa - 5
 Esperansa (alias Catje)
 Eva - 2
 Flora - 3
 Fortuna
 Françoisa Susanna
 François de Joy
 Fransisca
 Francisca Phelipa
 Gracia - 3
 Gracia Isabella
 Grasia - 1

Grasia Maria
 Gracie - 4
 Gracie Grandie
 Grasje
 Gratie
 Guana
 Hana Francisca
 Helena - 4
 Helina
 Hendrina
 Hilina
 Isabel Bentura
 Isabella Martina
 Izabella
 Jeanetton
 Johanna - 2
 Juana - 6
 Juana Anthonia (alias Juana Grandi)
 Juana Maria Tocaca
 Juana Sebel
 Juanotta - 2
 Kito
 Kitti
 Lena - 5
 Lena Chikito
 Leonora - 2
 Leonora Francisca - 2
 Lisetta
 Losia
 Louise Claire
 Lousia
 Lucia - 2
 Lusitje
 Maartha Surinaam
 Madalenchy
 Magdaleentje - 2
 Magdalena - 4
 Maleentje
 Manuela
 Margaritha
 Margaritha Gueda

Margaritha Juan Pedro
 Marguerite
 Maria - 14
 Maria Anthonia - 2
 Maria Anthony
 Maria Anttonia
 Maria Augustina (alias Lesette)
 Maria Bibiana
 Maria Carolina
 Maria Catharina
 Maria Christiaansz
 Maria Christina
 Maria Clara
 Maria Fortuna - 3
 Maria Francisca - 2
 Maria Fransisca
 Maria Galiana
 Maria Galinha
 Maria Gosepa
 Maria Gracia
 Maria Gracie (alias Thyna)
 Maria Grasia
 Maria Gracie - 2
 Maria Gueda
 Maria Inees
 Maria Jeana Reyna
 Maria Juana Jacob (alias Maritje)
 Maria Lisette (alias Mottje Truy)
 Maria Louisa
 Maria Louisa (alias Limon)
 Maria Louise
 Maria Magdalena - 15
 Maria Magdalena (alias Eva)
 Maria Magdalena (alias Maritje)
 Maria Magdalena (alias Markita Halas)
 Maria Magdalena Bernardo
 Maria Martha - 6
 Maria Martina
 Maria Michel
 Maria Moulat

Maria Patientie
 Maria Perfetta
 Maria Pierre
 Maria Polonia
 Maria Poulina
 Maria Rosa - 3
 Maria Sambo
 Maria Sebel - 5
 Maria Sebel (alias Bettje) - 2
 Maria Suzanna
 Maria Theresa
 Maria Thomasina
 Maria[a]ntje - 3
 Mariana - 2
 Marie
 Marie (alias Marotte)
 Marie Chaterine (alias Angelique)
 Marie Françoise - 3
 Marie Jeanne - 2
 Marie Louise
 Marietje - 2
 Marjaantje - 2
 Markita - 3
 Marquita - 3
 Mar[r]itje - 11
 Martha - 10
 Martha Anthonia
 Martha Anthony
 Martha Francisca
 Martha Samba
 Mart[h]ina - 2
 Mathurine
 Matoentje - 2
 Memie
 Merij
 Miriaantje
 Mitje
 Nencia
 Nesje
 Noortje
 Oliana Alberta

Patientia
 Pellague - 2
 Penna
 Perla
 Perrinne
 Petrona
 Phelipa
 Poulina - 2
 Primera - 2
 Reyna - 2
 Rosa
 Rosetta
 Rosie
 Rozette - 2
 Sablica - 3
 Salinda
 Samba
 Sara (alias Maria Catharina)
 Saravina
 Sebel Diana
 Sebelinja (alias Maria Augustina)
 Sebel[] - 9
 Selia
 Seraphine
 Servina - 3
 Sica - 2
 Sicilia - 2
 Sieca

Boys

Adam
 Adriaan - 2
 Alberto
 Albertus - 2
 Alexandre Obispo
 Ambrosius
 Andries
 Anthony Comenentie
 Anthony Martijn
 Antonio Annamia

Silvie
 Soliana
 Sophia
 Speransa
 Spransa - 4
 Sufia
 Susanche
 Susanna - 10
 Susanna Francisca
 Susanna Penijn
 Susantje - 2
 Susantje Francisca
 Suzanna - 2
 Theodora
 Theresa - 5
 Thiena
 Thina
 Thomasina - 2
 Tiena
 Tyna
 Venus
 Victoire
 Willemijntje
 Willemina - 2
 Zabeth
 Zebel Sabaleta
 Zuzanna Maria

Augustin
 Balerio
 Barthol
 Bartholomeus - 3
 Bartholomeus Paulo
 Benjamin (alias José)
 Bernard
 Bernard Floris
 Bernardo - 2
 Bernardus

Bisento
 Bitoriaan
 Camilio Martin
 Carel Gabriel
 Carlo(s) - 3
 Caspaar
 Charle
 Christiaan - 2
 Christoffel
 Claas
 Cornelis
 Cornelis Lammerse
 Da
 Dirck Daniel
 Dirk
 Doekie
 Domingito
 Domingo Lasana
 Elias George
 Felis Bentuura
 Felix Jurriaan (alias Constantin)
 Floris Anthony
 Francisco (alias Bongolotje)
 Francisco Balero
 Gaspar Joseph
 George
 Gerard - 2
 Gerardo
 Giermo Apolis
 Gion Dionies
 Gozé Robertus
 Hendrik - 4
 Hironimus Palonia
 Hosé Martien
 Isaac
 Isaac Leonardo
 Isidro Anthony
 Jacob - 2
 Jacob Bartholomeus
 Jacobus
 Jacobus Constantin

Jan - 2
 Jan Hendrik
 Jan Micheel
 Jantje
 Jean Claude
 Jean François
 Jean George
 Jean Jacques
 Jean Joseph Cazemier
 Jean Joseph Ditchateau
 Jean Pierre - 2
 Johannes - 7
 Johannes (alias Alexander)
 Johannes Anthony
 Johannes Baptist
 Johannes Daniel
 Johannes Doekie
 Johannes Lourens
 Johannes Meyer
 Johannes Palomino
 José
 Joseph - 7
 Joseph Balentien
 Joseph Boulin
 Joseph Martin
 Juan
 Juan Anthony Lodrigo
 Juan Baptista
 Juan Bautista
 Juan Begilla
 Juan Bernardo
 Juan Damaso
 Juan Domingo - 2
 Juan Domingo Tobias
 Juan Felix
 Juan Fernando
 Juan Fernandos
 Juan Francisco
 Juan Fransisco
 Juan Guillermo
 Juan Matthias

Juan Mingeel – 2
 Juan Nicolaas
 Juan Paulo
 Juan Pedro – 3
 Juan Pedro Martin
 Juan Pierre
 Juan Rimón
 Juanico
 Juantje
 Kalistre Martis
 Leonardo
 Louis
 Louis Reneau
 Manchy
 Manuel – 5
 Marcus Martin
 Marten – 2
 Martes
 Martin – 4
 Martis Augustin
 Matheuw
 Matthias
 Migeel (Miguel)
 Mingeel Albertus
 Nicolaas – 3
 Nicolaas Baptista
 Nicolaes
 Noël
 Pasquaal Antony

Girls

Adelaida
 Agatha
 Aldersina – 2
 Alexandrice
 Alexies
 Andrea – 2
 Andresina Gerarda
 Angeliq
 Anna – 7

Paul
 Pedro
 Pedro Alexandro
 Pedro Graciea
 Phelis
 Phelis Anthony
 Phelix
 Philipe
 Philipi
 Philipie Benevaas
 Phil[ip] – 2
 Pierre
 Pierre Alexis
 Pierre Paul
 Pieter Claase
 Popot
 Rijnardus Korpus
 Salbadoor Francisco
 Sano
 Saul Marcus
 Silvestre
 Simon – 2
 Steba
 Theodorus
 Thomas – 2
 Thony – 2
 Wiel
 Willem – 2
 William Henry

Anna Cathaliena
 Anna Catharina
 Anna Christina – 5
 Anna Florencia
 Anna Geyna
 Anna Gilina
 Anna Margaritha
 Anna Maria – 5
 Anna Maria Promyra

Anna Mariana
 Anna Maritje
 Anna Mietje
 Anna Polinia
 Anna Roselentje
 Anne
 Anthonet[t]je – 4
 Antje (alias Bamba)
 Antoinette
 Ariaantje
 Baloché
 Bernardina (alias Nina)
 Bet[t]je – 3
 Caela
 Carolina – 3
 Carolina Martina
 Catalina Antonia
 Cathalina – 2
 Catharina – 3
 Cathrijn
 Celeste
 Celesti
 Cetout
 Clara – 3
 Claesa
 Daina
 Damietta
 Dianora Francisca
 Dominga
 Dominga Françisca
 Dorothea – 2
 Elizabeth – 2
 Eva
 Felipa Fransisca
 Fina
 Flora
 Florinda
 Fortuna
 Francisca Anthonia
 Fresine
 Genevieve

Gerarda
 Grasia
 Gregoria Zusanna
 Grietje
 Guana Andrea
 Helena – 3
 Hendrina
 Hendrina Philitia
 Henrietta
 Isebia
 Jacomela
 Jeanne Marie de Martina
 Johanna – 2
 Johanna Carolina
 Johanna Clasina
 Juana Ignees
 Juana Philipa
 Leentje
 Lena – 2
 Leonora – 2
 Lositje Constantia
 Louisa – 2
 Luize Naneni
 Magdaleentje
 Magdalena – 2
 Margaritha Julie
 Maria – 7
 Maria Andelisa
 Maria Apolonia
 Maria Benefasia
 Maria Bernard
 Maria Carolina
 Maria Dorothea
 Maria Eleonora
 Maria Elisabeth – 2
 Maria Gracie
 Maria Johanna (alias Willemijntje)
 Maria Joseph
 Maria Leonor
 Maria Luize
 Maria Magdalena – 4

Maria Manuela	Nicole
Maria Martha – 4	Nina – 2
Maria Pasentia	Noortje – 4
Maria Petrona – 2	Olaura Balentien
Maria Pieternelle	Pasientce
Maria Roosa	Pasentia
Maria Roza	Paulina – 2
Maria Sambo	Paulina Albertus
Maria Sebel – 2	Petronella Joseph
Maria Susanna (alias Mietje)	Poulina – 4
Maria Usebia	Reenieta
Maria Zabeth	Regina
Mariana	Rephaela
Marianne	Reynieta
Marie Josephe	Rose – 2
Marie Louise	Samnette
Marie Magdelaine	Sebel – 3
Marie Noël	Sebel Laryna
Marie Sian	Severina Martina
Marie Therese	Sofia Beltrand
Marietje	Sophie
Markieta	Susanna – 2
Martha	Suzanna
Martha Marthina	Theresa
Mart[h]ina – 4	Thina
Mersalina Martin	Willemina – 2
Merselina	Zebel
Meyna	Zusanna
Micaela	

Slaves with Surnames

- Antones, Willem (mestizo) – owned by Hana Ysrael and David Baruh Louzado
 Bautista, Juan (black) – owned by Salomon Levy Maduro; son of Juan Bautista and Anna Maria (free blacks)
 Begilla, Juan (mestizo) – owned by Abraham de Marchena
 Belmonte, Manuel (mestizo) – owned by Isaak Hisquiau Andrade
 Cardose, Simon (mulatto) – owned by Hector Aitken
 Casseres, Nicolaas (free sambo) – [?]

- Claasz, Dominga, Johanna and Juan (sambos) – owned by Jacob van David Senior; children of Catharina Fransisca (free black); manumission sponsored by Claas Senior (free mulatto)
 Cohen, Catrijntje (mulatta) – [?]; Catrijntje sponsored the manumission of two slaves belonging to Ester and David Cohen Henriquez, so they possibly shared a family relationship.
 Cohen, Francisco (mulatto) – owned by David Cohen Henriques
 Cohen, Maria Martha (black) – [?] [see entry below for Janboos]
 Cohen Henriques, Jacob Bartholomeus (mulatto) – owned by Ribca van David Cohen Henriques and Benjamin Cohen Henriques; son of their slave Martina (sambo)
 Craval, Jan Isaak (mulatto) – owned by Flora Dina Kemp and Manuel Marchena
 Curiel, Johannes (alias Johannes Baptist; mestizo) – owned by Jan Nicolaas Kock
 Da Costa, Anthonio (mestizo) – owned by Ishac Hisquiao Andrade
 Da Costa, Elisabeth (mestiza) – owned by Willemina Rsmijn and Hendrik Daniel Veeris
 De Britto, Anna Esperansa (free black) – [?]
 De Casie, Juan Nicolaas (black) – owned by Rachel Keyser and Isaak de la Rosa; manumission paid for by Maria Patiensia (free black)
 De Casseres, Claas (mulatto) – owned by Samuel de Casseres
 De Jong, Hendrik (mestizo) – owned by Moses Naar Henriques; daughter of his slave Poulina (mulatta)
 De la Pena, Nicolaas (free mulatto) – [?]
 De la Torre, Marie (mulatta) – owned by Jeossuah Henriques, Jr.
 De Leon, Clara [?] – daughter of Abraham van Jacob Jeudah Leon and his slave Maria Galiana (black)
 De Lima, Juan Francisco (mulatto) – owned by David Abinun de Lima; son of Maria Magdalena (alias Markita Halas; black)
 De Paz, Maria [?] – owned by Ester da Costa Andrade and Jeremias van Isaac Levy Maduro; daughter of their slave Clara (black)
 De Senior, Matthias (mulatto) – owned by Isaac van Abraham Senior
 De Uria, Marcus Martin (black) – owned by Elias Parera
 De Witt, Jan (mulatto) – owned by Jacob Pinedo
 Duran, Hendrina (mestiza) – owned by Ester and David Parera
 Escovar, Anna (mestiza) – owned by Abraham de Marchena
 Fernando, Juan Pedro (black) – owned by Abraham de Isaak Senior
 Fox, Benjamin (alias José; black) – owned by Samuel Hoheb; daughter of his slave Sara (alias Maria Catharina; black); manumission sponsored by Benjamin Fox (black)

- Gabriel, Carel (black) – owned by Abraham de Chaves; son of Susanna (black slave of De Chaves); manumission sponsored by Manuel Gabriel (free black)
- Gonsales, Catharina (free mulatta) – [?]
- Henriques, Jacobus (mulatto) – owned by Pieter Henricus; either the owner's name is misspelled or the slave adopted a Sephardic name. Perhaps by coincidence his father was ■ Henriques.
- Henriques, Joseph (mestizo) – owned by Josias Idanha de Casseres; son of his slave Susanna (mulatta)
- Henriques, Maria Magdalena (mulatta) – owned by Saul Idanha de Casseres
- Henriques, Philip (sambo) – owned by Maria Liest and Jan Christoffel Duuringh; manumission sponsored by Elizabeth Henriques
- Henriques Garzez, Casper (free mulatto) – [?]
- Henriquez, Dirk (mulatto) – owned by Lea Andrade and Aron Lopez da Fonseca
- Isidro, Johannes and Joseph (mulattos) – owned by David Senior
- Jacob, Maria Juana (mulatta) – owned by Sara Alvares Correa and Isaac Haim Rodrigues da Costa
- Janboos, Anna Florencia and Philipie Benevaas (blacks) – children of Maria Martha Cohen (black); manumission sponsored by Pieter Jan Boos (free black) and Jacob Henriques Moron de Losena and Abraham van Isaak Henriques Moron
- Jesurun, Lena (black) – owned by Isaac Sebastiaan Henriquez Cotino
- Kelo, Anna Maria Francisca (mulatta) – owned by Ribca and Benjamin Cohen Henriquez
- Kemp, Jacobus (sambo) – owned by Cohen Henriquez, Jr.; Flora Dina Kemp was the wife of Manuel Marchena
- Laguna, Juan (black) – owned by Semuel de Joseph da Costa Gomez
- Lekwona, Juana (mestiza) – owned by Johanna Pinero; manumission sponsored by Joseph Manuel Lekwona
- Levy, Anna Maria (free mestiza) – [?]
- Levy, Egenia (mulatta) – owned by Ester Levy
- Levy, Heronimo (mulatto) – owned by Elias Levy
- Levy, Hironimo (free mulatto) – probably same person as above
- Levy, Johannes (mulatto) – owned by Lea de medina and Isaac Levy
- Levy, Maria Magdalena (free mulatta) – [?]
- Loberia, Bernardo (mestizo) – owned by Abigael Penso and Abraham Henriquez Moron; son of their slave Lena (mulatta); manumission paid for by Joseph Loberia
- Lopes, Anna Francisca (alias Patjanga; mulatta) – owned by Jacob Rodrigues Brandon

- Lopes, Maria (free mulatta) – [?]
- Lopes Patiango, Hana Francisca (alias Spanjool; mulatta) – owned by Jacob Rodrigues Brandam
- Lopez, Elizabeth (mestiza) – owned by Jacob Soares; daughter of Anna (mulatta)
- Louzada, Bernard (mulatto) – owned by Clara Baruch Louzada
- Maduro, Bartholomeuw Francisco (free mulatto) – [?]
- Maduro, Jacob Francisco (free mulatto) – [?]
- Maduro, Joseph (free mulatto) – [?]
- Mannas, Jr., Manuel (sambo) – owned by Jacob Jessurun Lindo
- Manuel, Sebel (mulatta) – owned by Rachel Marchena and Isaac Haim Senior
- Marchena, Domingo (free mulatto) – [?]
- Monsanto, Anthony (mulatto) – owned by Reyna Levy Soares and Samuel Vas Martines
- Monsanto, Johannes Lourens (mulatto) – owned by Ribca Henriquez Cotino and Jacob van Elias Parera
- Monsanto, Juan Pedro (black) – owned by Ribca Monsanto
- Monsanto, Manuel (free mulatto) – [?]
- Montero, Louis Gaspar (mulatto) – owned by Jacob de Moseh Naar
- Moreno, Juana (mulatta) – owned by Rachel Lopes da Fonseca and Jeudah Cohen Henriques
- Moron, Anna Cathalina (free mulatta) – [?]
- Motta, Maria Martha (free mulatta) – [?]
- Naar, Anna (mestiza) – owned by Joseph Pinero
- Pardo, Henrietta (mestiza) – owned by Rachel Dovale and Mordechay Pardo
- Parrera, Adam (alias Anthony; black) – owned by Jacob Haim Rodrigues Parrera
- Pedro, Juan (black) – owned by Josias Dovall; son of Juan Pedro (black, owned by Gerrard Striddels)
- Peney, Anna Margaritha [?] – owned by Rachel Parera and Isaac Penso; daughter of their slave [?] Catharina Fransisca (black)
- Penha, Marten (mestizo) – owned by Ribca Molina
- Penso, Anna (mulatta) – owned by Manuel de Raphael Alvares Correa
- Penso, Jan Hendrik (mestizo) – owned by Gijsbert van Heuman; son of his slave Maria Magdalena (mulatta)
- Pereira, Juan Antonio (mulatto) – [?]
- Pietersz, Suzanna (black) – owned by Jacob Guardaloupe Andrade
- Pietersz, Thomas (black) – owned by Jeosuah Henriquesz
- Pimentel, Anna Thina (mulatta) – owned by Sara Lopes and Samuel Pimentel
- Pinedo, Catharina (free mestiza) – [?]
- Pinedo, Johanna (mulatta) – owned by Isaak van Jacob Henriques Fereyra

Pinedo, Juana, Nicolaas and Philip (mulattos) – owned by Manuel H. Pinedo
 Pinero, Adriaan (mulatto) – owned by David Jezurun Henriquez
 Pinero, Joseph (mulatto) – owned by David Jezurun Henriquez
 Pinheyro de Nogeiro, Maria Martina (mulatta) – owned by Rachel Pinheyro de Nogeiro
 Popa, Maria Magdalena (black) – owned by Benjamin Naar
 Ricardo, Johannes (mestizo) – owned by Rachel Lopez Fonseca and Jeudah Cohen Henriquez
 Rodrigues, Juan Domingo (black) – owned by Abraham Ir. Henriquez
 Sabaleta, Catharina (mestiza) – owned by Salomon Lopez Henriquez; daughter of Zebel Sabaleta (mulatta)
 Sansosie, Andrees Goosé (black) – owned by Gabriel Levy
 Senior, Catharina (free black) – [?]
 Senior, Tjekoe (black) – owned by Lea Jesurun and Mordochay Haim Senior
 Senjor, Claas (mulatto) – owned by David Barugh Louzada
 Sicard, Catharina (mulatta) – owned by Abraham van Jacob Judagh Leon; daughter of Maria Gosepa (mulatta)
 Soares, Bernaldo (mulatto) – owned by David and Benjamin Soares
 Soares, Juan Damaso (mestizo) – owned by Isaak de Jacob Jeudah Leao; son of Catrijntje van Maria Gueda (mulatta)
 Tentura, Joseph Balentien (mestizo) – owned by Isaac Lopes Penha; son of his slave Clara Augustin de Sans (mulatta)
 Tocaca, Juana Maria (black) – owned by Ribca Aboab Cardozo
 Van Cohen, Catharina (free mulatta)
 Willemsz, Anna Maria (mulatta) – owned by Hendrina Forcado

Source: T. Van der Lee, *Curaçaose Vrijbrieven*.

APPENDIX 5

Names of Sephardic Jews in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica
(Died Before 1800)

Men

Aaron, Aharon – 13
 Aaron Haim – 2
 Abraham – 40
 Abraham Hisquiyau
 Benjamin, Binhamin – 13
 Benjamin Hezekiah
 Benjamin Kizza
 Daniel – 11
 David – 29
 David Hayim
 David Hezekiah – 2
 David Israel
 David Shalom
 Eliau – 2
 Eliau Haim
 Elisha
 Emanuel – 4
 Haim Abraham
 Haim Daniel Hezekiah
 Haim Ishac
 Haim Jahacob
 Hezekiah David
 Isaac, Isaque, Ishak, Yshack – 49
 Isaac Haim
 Isaac Hezekiah

Isaac Israel
 Israel
 Jacob, Iacob, Iahacob,
 Jahacob – 49
 Jacob Haim – 2
 Jacob Hezekiah – 3
 Jacob Hezekiah Haim
 Jacob Israel
 Jeosuah Hisquiau
 Joseph, Iosef – 15
 Joseph Hisquiou
 Joshiahu
 Judah
 Mannuel Mordecai
 Menas[s]eh – 2
 Michael – 2
 Mordecai – 2
 Moses, Moseh – 38
 Moses Elijah
 Moses Haim
 Moses Hezekiah
 Nathan – 2
 Philip
 Raphael, Rephael – 2
 Sadik Haim Hisquiau

Samuel, Semuel – 13
Samuel Haim

Samuel Haim Rephael
Solomon – 13

Women

Abigail – 11
Abigail Miriam
Bloom
Branca
Deborah
Ester, Esther – 46
Gracia – 2
Hannah, Hana, Hanah – 3
Judica
Judith, Jeudith – 13
Leah – 17
Leah Miriam
Luna – 4
Michal

Miriam
Miryam Ester
Rachel, Raquell – 40
Rachel Hannah – 2
Rachel Jeudith
Rebecca, Ribca, Ribkah – 24
Rebecca Esther
Rebecca Miriam
Sarah – 42
Sarah Hannah
Sarah Leah
Sarah Ribca
Yael

Source: Richard D. Barnett and Philip Wright, *The Jews of Jamaica*.

APPENDIX 6

Names of Sephardic Jews in Curaçao (Died Before 1800)

Men

Abraham – 93
Abraham Haim – 11
Abraham Haim Hizquiau
Abraham Hisquiau – 7
Abraham Israel – 2
Abraham Jesahyau
Ah[a]ron, Aron – 18
A[ha]ron Haim – 2
Aron Hisquiau – 2
Baruch
Benaiau
Benjamin, Beniamin, Benjamin,
Binyamin – 32
Benjamin/Binjamin Haim – 3
Binyamin Baruh
Binyamin Hizquiau – 3
Benjamin Rephael – 2
Daniel – 18
David – 61
David Abraham
David Haim – 2
David Hisquiau – 5
David Israel – 2
David Rephael – 3
Efraim, Ephraim – 2
Eliao, Eliau – 26

Eliao Haim
Eliao Hiskiao
Elyezer
Ephraim Haim
Ephraim Israel
Gabriel – 6
Gabriel Rephael
Haim – 2
Haim Abraham
Haim Benjamin
Haim David – 2
Haim Eliao/u – 2
Haim Iacob, Yacob – 4
Haim Iosseph
Haim Jeudah
Haim Josiao
Haim Mosseh
Hezra
Hisquiao Benjamin
Hisquiao Ioseph
Hisquiau David
Hisquiau Iahacob – 2
Hisquiau Iahacob Haim
Huziyahu
Iacob, Iahacob, Jacob, Jahacob,
Yacob – 109

Iacob Haim – 8
 Iacob Haim Ysrael
 Iacob Israel
 Iahacob Hisquiau – 3
 Ieosuah, Jeosuah, Yeosua[h] – 12
 Ieudah, Yeudah – 7
 Imanuel, Ymanuel – 10
 Iosiau, Josiau, Josiahua – 6
 Ios[s]eph, Jos[s]eph, Yosseph – 17
 Iosseph Haim – 3
 Irmiao, Jermu, Yrimeyahu – 3
 Ishac, Ishak, Isaac, Yshac[k] – 81
 Ishac Haim – 12
 Ishac Hisquiao/u – 4
 Ishac Rephael – 4
 Joseph Hisquiau
 Josiau Haim
 Josseph Jsrael
 Manuel – 4
 Manuel Haim
 Manuel Haim Hisquiau
 Manuel Hisquiao/u – 2
 Menas[s]eh – 2

Women

Abigail, Abigayl, Abihail – 24
 Abigail Hana – 4
 Bat[h]seba[h] – 10
 Batsebah/Batzebah Hana – 3
 Branca – 2
 Clara – 12
 Debora[h] – 16
 Debora Sara
 Ester – 116
 Ester Abigail
 Ester Hana[h] – 7
 Ester Lea[h] – 2
 Ester Miryam
 Ester Sara

Michael – 2
 Morde[c]hay, Mordechai,
 Mordo[c]hay – 39
 Mordehay Haim – 5
 Mordehay Hisquiao – 4
 Mordehay Raphael
 Mordochy Israel
 Mos[s]eh, Moses – 62
 Mosseeh Benjamin
 Mos[s]eh Haim – 4
 Mosseeh Hisquiao/u – 7
 Mosseeh Israel – 2
 Mosseeh Rephael
 Rephael, Raphael – 7
 Rephael Ieudah
 Rephael Semuel
 Saul – 5
 Selomo[h] – 19
 Selomoh Israel
 Selomo[h] Rephael – 2
 Semuel, Samuel – 27
 Semuel Haim – 2
 Semuel Hisquiau – 3

Gracia, Grasia, Grazia – 14
 Grasia Sarah
 Hana[h] – 16
 Hana[h] Lea – 2
 Hana Lea Sara
 Hana Rachel
 Hana[h] Ribca – 2
 Hana[h] Sara[h] – 3
 Hava Sarah
 Iael Hanah
 Ieudit[h], Jeudit[h], Yeudid,
 Yeudit – 20
 Ieudit Leah
 Jael Leah

Lea[h] – 63
 Lea Clara
 Lea Hana – 3
 Lea Jael
 Lea Ribca
 Leah Sarah
 Luna – 3
 Malka
 Miriam, Miryam – 6
 Ra[c]hel, Rag[h]el, Raquel – 117
 Ra[c]hel Hana[h] – 11
 Rachel Ribca
 Rachel Simha
 Reyna – 2
 Rib[e]ca, Ribka – 89
 Ribca Abigail

Ribca Hana[h] – 7
 Ribca Rachel
 Ribca Sara[h] – 3
 Ribca Simha
 Sara[h] – 116
 Sara Haim
 Sara[h] Hana[h] – 24
 Sarah Lea[h] – 2
 Sarah Lea Abigail
 Sara[h] Ribca[h] – 6
 Sara Ribca Hana
 Sara Simha
 Simha – 4
 Simha Milcha
 Simha Sarah
 Violanta

Source: Isaac S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones*.

Glossary

- aggada. Stories, legends, fables, or parables found in the oral Torah.
- beit din. Rabbinic court of law, presided over by no fewer than three rabbis.
- drush. Yiddishism for "d'rasha," meaning a sermon, written or delivered orally.
- Haftorah. A section from the prophetic books of the Tanakh read in synagogue after the reading of the portion of the week, which always comes from the five books of Moses.
- halakha. The field of Jewish legal reasoning, rulings, and practices. A halakha refers to a specific law (pl.: halakhot).
- haskamot (also ascamot). The written constitution of a Sephardic congregation.
- hazan. Cantor, but also teacher, usually of young schoolchildren.
- Humash. The Pentateuch.
- ketuba. Halakhic marriage contract.
- kippa (s), kippot (pl.). The traditional Jewish skullcap worn by men.
- mahamad. The name given to the governing body of many Sephardic communities.
- midrash. Narrative found in the oral Torah, whose purpose can range from pure storytelling to parabolic exegesis of passages or incidents from the Torah.
- mikve. The ritual bath where Jewish women immerse after menstruation.
- minyan. A quorum of ten men needed for the saying of most prayer services.
- Mishna. The first compilation of Jewish law, redacted by Rabbi Yehuda ha-Nasi around 200 C.E.
- mitsva (s.), mitzvot (pl.). In the narrow sense, the biblical commandments to which Jews are beholden. In the wider sense, all religious duties.
- mohe! A person trained to perform circumcisions.
- Oral Torah. The entire corpus of works making up the post-biblical Rabbinic canon: the Mishna, two Talmuds (Babylonian and Jerusalem), and the many aggadic and halakhic compilations.
- parnas (s.), parnasim (pl.). The leaders of Sephardic communities, usually elected from and by the upper socioeconomic echelon.
- parsha. The portion of the Pentateuch read each week in synagogue.
- posek (s.), poskim (pl.). Rabbis who issue legal decrees meant to be followed by individuals or communities.
- sedaca. The Spanish and Portuguese form for tsedaka, that is, funds for the needy, charity.

Shabbat. The Jewish sabbath, which falls on Saturdays. In honor and imitation of God's having finished creating the world, Jews refrain from work.
 takana (s.), takanot (pl.). A rabbinic or communal ordinance.
 Torah. The books of the Old Testament, from Genesis to 2 Chronicles.
 Tosefta. Mishnaic material that did not make it into the final redaction of the Mishna.
 treyf. Non-kosher.
 tudesco, tudescos. Lit. "German," term used for Ashkenazic Jews.
 yeshiva. Traditional Jewish school for advanced students.

Notes

Introduction

1. Historical Research Department of The Nation of Islam, *The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews* (Chicago: Latimer Associates, 1991). See also the superficial, misled, and misleading research of Steven S. Sallie, "The Role of the Semitic Peoples in the Expansion of the World Economy via the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade: A Literature Extraction and an Interpretation," *Journal of Third World Studies* 11 (Fall 1994): 166-201.
2. This industry stems almost exclusively from the Jewish institutional world. Already in 1992, the Jewish Museum in New York sponsored an exhibition on Black-Jewish relations, which went on the road nationally and saw publication: Jack Salzman, ed., *Bridges and Boundaries: African American and American Jews* (New York: George Braziller/The Jewish Museum, 1992). A Black-Jewish Passover haggada, *A Common Road to Freedom*, has seen several editions; it is published by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, with financial support from the Marjorie Kovler Institute for Black/Jewish Relations and the Barbra Streisand Program for Black/Jewish Cooperation. Perhaps most incredibly, a quarterly magazine devoted to Black-Jewish relations, *CommonQuest*, was published for several years beginning in 1996 by the American Jewish Committee. Though published in conjunction with Howard University, the impetus and funding derived almost wholly from Jewish backers, including the Harry & Jeanette Weinberg Foundation, the Streisand Foundation, the Jean Axelrod Memorial Foundation, the Ryna and Melvin Cohen Family Foundation, and the Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Fund. That *CommonQuest* is already defunct testifies to the shallow nature of its purview. Leading Black institutions were not entirely absent from sight or lacking in interest. A 1996 Washington, DC conference on Black-Jewish Relations on the College Campus was cosponsored by the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, the United Negro College Fund, Hillel, and NAACP. In 1974, Fisk University and the American Jewish Committee sponsored a "National Consultation" on Blacks and Jews. But the overwhelming majority of the excitement for "Black-Jewish Relations" as a dialogue comes from the Jewish side.
3. David Brion Davis, "The Slave Trade and the Jews," *New York Review of Books*, 22 December 1994: 14-16; idem, "Jews in the Slave Trade," *CultureFront* 1, no. 2 (Fall 1992): 42-45; Eli Faber, *Jews, Slaves, and the Slave Trade: Setting the Record Straight* (New York: New York

- University Press, 1998); idem, *Slavery and the Jews: A Historical Inquiry*, Occasional Papers in Jewish History and Thought, No. 2, Hunter College Jewish Social Studies Program (New York: Hunter College of the City University of New York, 1994); Seymour Drescher, "Jews and Christians in the Atlantic Slave Trade," in *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, 1450 to 1800*, edited by Paolo Bernadini and Norman Fiering (New York: Berghahn Books, 2001), 439-70; idem, "The Role of Jews in the Transatlantic Slave Trade," *Immigrants and Minorities* 12, no. 2 (1993): 113-25.
4. Only in the eighteenth century, with the rise of literacy among slaves, do Black voices surface that provide a glimpse of their attitude toward Jews. I hope soon to publish a brief study of such eighteenth-century sources.
 5. Günter Böhm, *Los sefardíes en los dominios holandeses de América del Sur y del Caribe, 1630-1750*, Bibliotheca Ibero-Americana (Frankfurt am Main: Vervuert Verlag, 1992), 149, n. 45.
 6. Emphasis added; Wilfred S. Samuel, "A Review of the Jewish Colonists in Barbados in the Year 1680," *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* [hereafter *TJHSE*] 13 (1932/35): 46-47.
 7. George A. Kohut, "Sketches of Jewish Loyalty, Bravery and Patriotism in the South American Colonies and the West Indies," in Simon Wolf, *The American Jew as Patriot, Soldier and Citizen*, edited by Louis Edward Levy (Philadelphia/New York: Levytype Co./Brentano's, 1895), 471.
 8. Harold Brackman, "The Ebb and Flow of Conflict: A History of Black Jewish Relations Through 1900" (Ph.D. diss., UCLA, 1977).
 9. Bertram Wallace Korn, *Jews and Negro Slavery in the Old South, 1789-1865* (Elkins Park, PA: Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, 1961).
 10. The exception is David Brion Davis's fine chapter on Jews and slavery, cited below in note 30. On the rabbinic period: Ephraim Isaac, "Genesis, Judaism, and the 'Sons of Ham,'" *Slavery and Abolition* 1 (1980): 3-17; Daniel Boyarin, "Racism, the Talmud, and African American-Jewish Coalition" (unpublished 1993 paper, Berkeley, CA); David H. Aaron, "Early Rabbinic Exegesis on Noah's Son Ham and the So-Called Hamitic Myth," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 63 (1995): 721-59; David M. Goldenberg, "The Curse of Ham: A Case of Rabbinic Racism?" in *Struggles in the Promised Land: Toward a History of Black-Jewish Relations in the United States*, edited by Jack Salzman and Cornel West (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 21-51. The first full-length survey of Rabbinic and medieval Jewish images of Blacks appeared just as preparation of my manuscript ended: Abraham Melamed, *The Image of the Black in Jewish Culture: A History of the Other* [Hebrew] (Haifa: University of Haifa Press/Zamora-Bitan, 2002). Treatments of Black-Jewish relations since abolition are too numerous even to begin mentioning specific titles.
 11. Hasia R. Diner, *In the Almost Promised Land: American Jews and Blacks, 1915-1935* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1977); Korn, *Jews and Negro Slavery*; Robert G. Weisbord and Arthur Stein, *Bittersweet Encounter: The Afro-American and the American Jew* (Westport, CT: Negro Universities Press, 1970). In addition, see Brackman, "Ebb and Flow." Two other works treating the slavery era - both written by Jews who work for major Jewish institutions; both for a nonacademic audience - were rushed into press in order to rebut the pseudo-academic work put out by The Nation of Islam. They

- are: Harold Brackman, *Ministry of Lies: The Truth Behind The Nation of Islam's "The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews"* (New York: Four Walls Eight Windows/The Simon Wiesenthal Center, 1994), and *Jew-Hatred as History: An Analysis of The Nation of Islam's "The Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews"* ([New York: Anti-Defamation League, 1993]). Lastly is the overtly apologetic book by Saul S. Friedman, *Jews and the American Slave Trade* (New Brunswick: Transaction Press, 1997).
12. Joshua Rotenberg, "Black-Jewish Relations in Eighteenth Century Newport," *Rhode Island Jewish Historical Notes* 11, no. 2 (1992): 117-71; Benjamin Braude, "The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3rd Series 54, no. 1 (January 1997): 103-42; Alex Van Stipriaan, "An Unusual Parallel: Jews and Africans in Suriname in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries," *SR* 31, no. 1/2 (1997): 74-93. On the French context, see Pierre Pluchon, *Nègres et Juifs au XVIIIe siècle: le racisme au siècle des Lumières* (Paris: Tallandier, 1984); idem, *Un négociant juif et deux esclaves nègres à Paris: aspects du racisme au siècle des Lumières* (Port-au-Prince: Institut Français D'Haïti, 1979).
 13. Jonathan Schorsch, "American Jewish Historians, Colonial Jews and Blacks, and the Limits of Wissenschaft: A Critical Review," *Jewish Social Studies* 6, no. 2 (Winter 2000): 102-32.
 14. Salo Wittmayer Baron, "Ghetto and Emancipation," *Menorah Journal* 14 (June 1928): 515-26; idem, *History and Jewish Historians* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1964), 65-106. David Biale, *Power and Powerlessness in Jewish History* (New York: Schocken Books, 1986), never mentioned the phenomenon of Jewish slaveholding, despite his search for modalities of Jewish empowerment.
 15. David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress* (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984); C. R. Boxer, *Race Relations in the Portuguese Colonial Empire: 1415-1825* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963); Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550-1812* (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1968); Magnus Mörner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1967); Stephen J. Greenblatt, *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991); idem, *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture* (New York: Routledge, 1990); R. Douglas Cope, *The Limits of Racial Domination: Plebeian Society in Colonial Mexico City, 1660-1720* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1994); Michael Nerlich, *Ideology of Adventure: Studies in Modern Consciousness, 1100-1750* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1987); Peter Burke, *The Historical Anthropology of Early Modern Italy: Essays on Perception and Communication* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); David Nirenberg, *Communities of Violence: Persecution of Minorities in the Middle Ages* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).
 16. Cited in Leo Spitzer, Jr., *Lives in Between: Assimilation and Marginality in Austria, Brazil, West Africa, 1780-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 11.
 17. See, for instance, Alan L. Karras, "The Atlantic World as a Unit of Study," in *Atlantic American Societies: From Columbus Through Abolition, 1492-1888*, edited by Alan L. Karras and J. R. McNeill (New York: Routledge, 1992), 1-15.
 18. Daniel M. Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans: The Portuguese Jews of Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam* (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 2000), xii.

- Continuatio Mediaevalis, 72 [Turnholt: Typographi Brepols Editores Pontificii, 1987], 10).
11. The map was reproduced in Anthony Grafton, April Shelford, and Nancy Siraisi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts: The Power of Tradition and the Shock of Discovery* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1992), 20. A map in the 1472 Augberg edition of Isidor's *Etymologiarum sive originum libri XX* provided the same homology between the three continents and Noah's three sons; reproduced in James Romm, "Biblical History and the Americas: The Legend of Solomon's Ophir, 1492-1591," in Bernardini and Fiering, *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West*, 35.
 12. Like the biblical original, the ancient Greek versions of Josephus scattered Noah's three sons in a manner that totally disregarded the later-known outlines of the continents (*Jewish Antiquities*, I.122-39, 143-47). On the other hand, the Hebrew Josippon (written ca. 946-965, probably by a Neapolitan Jewish physician), which detailed only the descendants of Yefet, assigned them exclusively "European" territories, including Russia (David Flusser, ed., *Sefer Yosippon*, 2 vols. [Jerusalem: Mosad Bialik, 1981], 1:1-31). Numerous Latin translations of the works of Josephus appeared in print and manuscript. The author of the Hebrew Josippon based himself on a Latin manuscript combining parts of *Jewish Antiquities* and parts of *The Jewish War* (Flusser, *Sefer Yosippon*, 2:124). For an overall synopsis, see Franz Blatt, *The Latin Josephus* (København: Munksgaard, 1958), vol. 1.
 13. He cited Josippon repeatedly when explicating the geography of Kush and his descendants: "From Kush came the black Kushites and the inhabitants of Ethiopia which is at the end of Mauritania, a vast land to the east, as wrote Josippon." He again cited Josippon concerning Phut's descendants, who occupied Libya, which was first named after Phut but later acquired the name of a descendant, Libio / לִיבִי' (Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Gen. 10). This citation, however, unlike the previous one, came from the original Josephus (*Jewish Antiquities*, I.133).
 14. Yitzhak Abravanel, *Merkevet ha-Mishna: perush le-Mishne Torah al Hiburo sar ve-gadol be-Yisrael Don Yitzhak Abravanel, av be-Torah*, edited by Yosef b'r Ya'akov mi-Padua (Sabioneta, 5311), 99b. In his commentary to Amos 9:7 his remarks read: "God said to his people, 'Are you not like the Kushites to me, Israel?' for the black Kushites descended from Kush son of Ham are slaves forever to their masters. So are you certainly my slaves, [you] whom I raised up out of the land of Egypt and I acquired you by means of a strong arm" (Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, ad loc.).
 15. On the routine nature of manumissions in fifteenth-century Spain and Portugal, see the literature I cite in Chapter 3, n. 63.
 16. Cited in Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, ad loc. Amos 9:7.
 17. Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Gen. 10:1.
 18. Abravanel also applied it to Adam's three sons - Cain, Abel, and Seth - who represented, respectively, the animal, political, and rational life (Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Gen. 4:25; Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 139-40). According to Netanyahu, Abravanel was here following Yosef Albo, *Sefer ha-Ikkarim*, bk. 3, ch. 15, sec. 8.
 19. Aristotle, *Aristotle's Politics*, translated by Benjamin Jowett (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1916), 264. According to the translation of T. A. Sinclair, northerners are full of "courage and passion but somewhat lacking in skill and brainpower," while Asiatics

- "have both brains and skill but are lacking in courage and willpower" (Aristotle, *The Politics*, translated by T. A. Sinclair [New York: Penguin Books, 1962], 213).
20. Lloyd A. Thompson, *Rome and Race*, The University Lecture, 1981 (Ibadan: University of Ibadan, 1987), 13-14, 99, nn. 7 and 9.
 21. Cited in Frank Snowden, *Before Color Prejudice: The Ancient View of Blacks* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 86.
 22. Abravanel elsewhere recast the biblical stories in the language of classical geographic theories. Emphasizing the difference between the two twins Ya'akov and Esav, whose struggles in Rivka's womb the Bible and midrash likened to the confrontation between two nations, Abravanel employed a merism taken from classical geography: "for they will be different in their natures and their laws and beliefs like two peoples from different nations and as if one of them is an Indian in the farthest east and the other an Askenazi in the farthest west [i.e., a German, here in the loosest sense; a Scandinavian?]" (Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, 1:296, comm. to Gen. 25).
 23. Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Gen. 10:1. Many earlier rabbis used the wordplay between "Kena'an" and "hakhna'ali" (= submission) in explicating Canaanite servitude.
 24. L. Strauss, "On Abravanel's Philosophical Tendency and Political Teaching," in *Isaac Abravanel: Six Lectures*, edited by J. B. Trend and H. Loewe ([Cambridge]: Cambridge University Press, 1937), 105, n. 3; Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 153-54.
 25. "The enslaved are not worthy to be at the same level of honor and gain and stature as their masters, but it is meet that some sign of servitude and submission should ever be found in/on them"; "... due to their being slaves, and the Sage [Aristotle] said that the nature of free men will not suffer submission, and the nature of slaves will not suffer nature of free men will not suffer submission, and the nature of the perfection of the Jews high stature and the boons of freedom"; "... because of the perfection of the Jews [בעלי הדת] over the rest of the nations, because of the Torah this nation was chosen completely, without measure over the rest of the nations"; etc. (Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Deut. 20:10). One possible source for these comments is Seneca, *On Benefits*, bk. 3, ch. 20, sec. 1.
 26. Anthony Pagden, *The Fall of Natural Man: The American Indian and the Origins of Comparative Ethnology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 41. Pagden overstated his case, however; cf. Peter Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), for the many Christian applications, however brief, of the concept of natural slavery. See also Silvio Zavala, *Servidumbre natural y libertad cristiana: según los tratadistas españoles de los siglos XVI y XVII*, 2d ed. (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1975), esp. ch. 1.
 27. A concise survey can be found in David M. Goldenberg, "The Development of the Idea of Race: Classical Paradigms and Medieval Elaborations," *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 5, no. 4 (Spring 1999): 561-70.
 28. Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*, 3 vols., translated by Franz Rosenthal, Bollingen Series 43 (New York: Pantheon Books, 1958), 1:170.
 29. Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 1:170-71.
 30. Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 1:168-69. See the nearly identical estimation presented by R. Moshe b. Maimon, or Maimonides (hereafter Rambam; d. 1204; Spain, Egypt): Those who are outside the city [that is, most distant from God, but also most removed from the polis, the site of civility] are all human individuals who have no doctrinal belief, neither

one based on speculation nor one that accepts the authority of tradition: such individuals as the furthestmost Turks found in the remote North, the Negroes found in the remote South, and those who resemble them from among them that are with us in these climes. The status of those is like that of irrational animals. To my mind they do not have the rank of men, but have among the beings a rank lower than the rank of man but higher than the rank of the apes. For they have the external shape and lineaments of a man and a faculty of discernment that is superior to that of the apes.

(Translated in Moses Maimonides, *The Guide to the Perplexed*, translated and edited by Shlomo Pines [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963], 2:618-19 [bk. 3, ch. 51].) Yehudah ha-Levi (ca. 1075-1141; Spain) proffered a more purely philosophical line of the same thought in his *Sefer ha-Kuzari* (1.1):

[E]very individual on earth has its completing causes; consequently an individual with perfect causes becomes perfect and another with imperfect causes remains imperfect, e.g. the negro is fit to receive nothing more than human shape and speech in its least developed form; the philosopher, however, who is equipped with the highest capacity, derives therefrom moral, intellectual and active advantages, so that he wants nothing to make him perfect.

(Translated in Yehuda ha-Levi, *Kuzari: The Book of Proof and Argument*, translated and edited by Isaak Heinemann [Oxford: East and West Library, 1957], 28.) It is not coincidental that both of these Jewish thinkers were heavily influenced by Muslim discourse; see, for example, S. Harvey, "A New Source of the Guide of the Perplexed," *Maimonidean Studies* 2 (1991): 31-60.

31. Ibn Khaldūn, *Muqaddimah*, 1:174. Islamic scholars, such as al-Mas'ūdī (*Murāj al-dihab*) and the ninth-century philosopher Ya'qūb b. Ishāq al-Kindī, had cited Galen to prove a congenital weakness of the brain among Blacks.
32. In the *Summa Theologiae* (I. IIae. q. 150, art. 4), Aquinas denied that servitude was the direct punishment for the sin of Noah's drunkenness, but elsewhere he asserted that sin led to the constriction of freedom and sinful conduct might lead to "the slavish state of beasts" (ibid., II. IIae. q. 64, art. 2). The Portuguese friar and bishop Álvaro Pais, or Alvarus Pelagius (1280-1353) held that servitude was introduced after sin and on account of sin (*De Planctu Ecclesie*, bk. 1, ch. 41). Egidio Colonna, known as Aegidius Romanus, maintained that peoples who failed to live peaceably under government, without laws, approached the level of beasts; the more bestial their behavior, the more naturally servile (*De Regimine Principum* [Rome, 1556], bk. 2, par. 1, ch. 1; bk. 3, par. 2, ch. 34).
33. Pseudo-Aristotle, *Segredo Dos Segredos*, edited by A. Moreira de Sá (Lisbon: Pub. da Fac. de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 1960), Pt. 4, 83-90.
34. From *Zeida la-Derekh* (Sabbionetta, 1567); translated in H. J. Zimmels, *Ashkenazim and Sephardim: Their Relations, Differences, and Problems as Reflected in the Rabbinical Responsa* (Hoboken, NJ: KTAV Publishing House, 1996), 2-3.
35. Except, of course, the Jews, whose "star" is none other than God (Yitshak Abravanel, *Ma'aynei Yeshu'a*, in *Perush al Ha-Torah*, 20b; *Ateret Zekeinim*, cited in Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 298, n. 123).
36. See, for instance, Aquinas's shuttling back and forth between the heavenly order and the human order in *Summa Contra Gentiles*, bk. 3, pt. 1, ch. 80-82.
37. "[F]or with the increase of the red [humor, i.e., blood] one will dream that someone will throw him onto a terrible flaming donkey, and when the white [humor, i.e., phlegm]

takes him over he will dream that he fell into vast waters and so on in this manner" (Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, 1:380, comm. to Gen. 41).

38. A nearly exact parallel regarding dreams can be found in Shmuel Zarza, *Mekor Hayyim* (Mantua, 1559), 95a (on Num. 12:1) and passim.
39. Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Gen. 25:24. Note the overlap with Abravanel's depiction of Nebuchadnezzar, cited later in this chapter.
40. Nancy G. Siraisi, *Medieval and Early Renaissance Medicine: An Introduction to Knowledge and Practice* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), 101.
41. See, for instance, ibid., 106.
42. Ibid., 103, referring to Galen's *On Complexions* and Ptolemy's *Tetrabiblos*.
43. Cited in Stanley W. Jackson, *Melancholia and Depression: From Hippocratic Times to Modern Times* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), 32.
44. Quoted in Jackson, *Melancholia*, 36.
45. Quoted in ibid., 39. Note the similarity with the later debasing portrayals of Ham in Midrash Tanhuma, Masudi, and others (cited later in this chapter).
46. Ibid., 51. Likewise for Ibn Sina, or Avicenna (980-1037), who held dark-complexioned and hairy people to be predisposed to melancholia (Jackson, *Melancholia*, 63).
47. Yosef b. Yehudah b. Ya'akov ibn Akhnin, *Hitgalut ha-Sodot ve-Hofa'at ha-Me'orot*, edited by Avraham Shlomo Halkin (Jerusalem: Mekitsei Nirdamim, 1964), ad loc. Song of Songs 1:6. Akhnin favored humoral explanations throughout his commentary to Song of Songs.
48. From *Sefer ha-Mevakesh* (written in the 1260s); cited in Abraham Melamed, "The Image of the Black as 'Other' in the History of Jewish Thought" [Hebrew], unpublished essay (Haifa, 1997), 1. Again, this trope came to Falaquera from Islamic roots. According to the Islamic author Ishaq ibn Imran (ninth/tenth century), one patient suffering from melancholia "saw negroes who wanted to kill him, as well as trumpeters and cymbal players who played in the corners of his room" (quoted in Manfred Ullman, *Islamic Medicine* [Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1978], 75).
49. See Rashi, citing Targum Yonatan, ad loc. Gen. 10:8.
50. Zarza, *Mekor Hayyim*, 11b. Zarza may have been citing from al-Konstantini's *Megaleh Amukot*, finished in Burgos in 1352, which I was unable to examine. Al-Konstantini came from a previously eminent family of courtiers and officials to the Crown of Aragon (thirteenth century) and other provinces.
51. Aretaeus of Cappadocia had noted that "the terms bile and anger are synonymous in import, and likewise black with much and furious" (cited in Jackson, *Melancholia*, 40).
52. For a general history, see Ignaz Goldziher, *Die Richtungen der Islamischen Koranauslegung* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1920), chs. 4 and 5; F. E. Peters, *Aristotle and the Arabs: The Aristotelian Tradition in Islam* (New York: New York University Press, 1968), 174-79; Frank Talmage, "Apples of Gold: The Inner Meaning of Sacred Texts in Medieval Judaism," in *Jewish Spirituality: From the Bible Through the Middle Ages*, edited by Arthur Green (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986), 313-55.
53. Paraphrased in Goldziher, *Richtungen*, 242-43.
54. Ibn Akhnin, *Hitgalut ha-Sodot*, ad loc. Song of Songs 5:10.
55. See the manuscript *Brevyloquio de amor e amicia*; cited in Nuria Bellosó Martín, *Política y humanismo en el siglo XV: el maestro Alfonso de Madrigal, el Tostado* (Valladolid: Universidad de Valladolid, 1989), 67.

56. Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Exod. 21:12. See also Naḥalat Avot on Pirkei Avot 1:5, warning against excessive conversation with women.
57. See the Book/Scroll of Esther 7:7.
58. "ואם כ"כ היה הרשעה מורגל ביינכם עד שנעשית בכם כדבר טבעי כשחרוהו הכוש' שלא יוכל" (Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Jer. 13:23).
59. Abravanel, *Ma'aynei Yeshu'a*, 6:4.
60. It should be remembered that Spanish convention – absolutely typical for European societies – barred men with backgrounds in manual labor or "base" occupations from holding positions of responsibility in municipal, provincial, or national government.
61. B.T. Sanhedrin 108b. Similar versions can also be found in Talmud Yerushalmi, Ta'anit 1:64d; Tanhuma Noah 12, was cited by Louis Ginzberg, *The Legends of the Jews*, 7 vols. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), 5:55, n. 178. This talmudic statement's opening, "Our Rabbis taught," signifies opinions untraceable because of their commonality, their almost collective existence. Ravens and dogs were almost universally denigrated in Rabbinic discourse.
62. See Moshe Beer, "Rav," in *EJ*, 13:1576-79; Zvi Kaplan, "Hiyya," in *EJ*, 8:793-96.
63. If I have correctly identified this figure, he was one of the leaders of the second generation of *amora'im* (second half of the third century), and a disciple of Rav's.
64. Bereshit Rabbah 36:7. The notion that Ḥam prevented Noah from having a fourth son by means of castration was brought in B.T. Sanhedrin 70a. Given the parallel statements from the Talmud and midrash, I find the efforts of Braude to disconnect the punning assertion of Ḥiya from any linkage with blackness somewhat forced (Braude, "Sons of Noah," 130, n. 60).
65. The children of Israel, of course, fit into the highest category of the temperate middle. See the statement attributed to Rabbi Yishmael in Mishna Nega'im 2:2 and B.T. Nega'im 20b: "The children of Israel... are like boxwood, neither black nor white but of an intermediate shade." Many Roman writers referred to "dark-skinned Indians, Moors and Egyptians, to some children of mixed black African and Roman parentage, and also to extreme whiteness" ■ *decolor*, "off-color" (Thompson, *Rome and Race*, 26).
66. Daniel Boyarin, "Racism," 29, n. 30.
67. Quoted in Garnsey, *Ideas of Slavery*, 44.
68. Although confusion is rampant about the varying Tanhuma versions, it is clear from references, to the Karaites, for instance, that no recension precedes the ninth century. Even so, it is likely that much of the material, which is of unknown origin, is of a later date. The location of its writing is also unknown, although its style and content seem to point to a European provenance (Moshe David Herr, "Tanhuma Yellamedenu," in *EJ*).
69. *Midrash Tanhuma*, assembled from various manuscripts, edited by Shlomo Buber (Jerusalem: Ortsel Ltd., 1963), parshat Noah, no. 13.
70. Cited in Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, 33-34.
71. Quoted in Snowden, *Before Color Prejudice*, 144, n. 37; Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, 52. According to Snowden, this passage is more reflective of Arab than of classical attitudes, since it seems that nowhere does this attribution even appear in extant Galen texts. Yet the same somatic features mentioned here were considered to typify the Ethiopian: "tightly-curved hair, thick lips, and broad or flat nose," as can be

- seen in *Moretum*, Petronius, and Martial, among other sources (Thompson, *Rome and Race*, 30).
72. Gernot Rotter, "Die Stellung Des Negers in der Islamisch-Arabischen Gesellschaft Bis Zum XVI. Jahrhundert" (Ph.D. diss., Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, Bonn, 1967), 141.
73. Because Ḥam had been blessed along with Shem and Yefet, Noah cursed only [Ḥam's] seed, . . . and because Ḥam saw with his eyes the nakedness of his father, the eyes of all his descendants were made squinty and red, and because he told his brothers with his mouth, their lips were made thick and bulky and their tongues were made stammering and barely comprehensible, and because he turned his face [to see], the hair of their heads and beards were burned [i.e., made kinky], and because he did not cover the nakedness, they were made to go naked without shame.
(David b. Avraham b. ha-Rambam ha-Nagid [or Maimuni], *Midrash Rabi David ha-Nagid*, edited by Avraham Yitzhak Katz [Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1964], 42.) According to Eliahu Ashtor, the commentaries of David ha-Nagid ("Nagid," the official head of the Jewish community) became popular among Egyptian Jews and "during many generations were read in synagogues" (Eliahu Ashtor, "David Ben Abraham Maimuni," in *EJ*, 5:1347).
74. Zecharia b. Shlomo ha-Rofe, *Midrash ha-Hefets: al Hamisha Humshei Torah*, 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1990-92), ad loc. Gen. 9:22.
75. Yosef Behor Shor, *Perushei Rabi Yosef Behor Shor al ha-Torah* (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1994), ad loc. Gen. 9:25.
76. Ya'akov Glis, ed., *Sefer Tosefot ha-Shalem* (Jerusalem, 1982), 275, variant 1 (*da'at zekeinim*), ad loc. Gen. 9:25; see also *Raboteinu Ba'alei ha-Tosefot* (Jerusalem: Levine-Epstein, 1967), 9.
77. "It is not fitting to relate Shem at all to Ḥam and his progeny, rather from now it is as if Ḥam and his progeny no longer exist" (Yosef ibn Kaspi, *Tirat Kesef* [Pressburg: Avraham b. David Alkalay and Son, 1905], 70).
78. See the printed version of the manuscript in the Bodleian Library (MS Heb. d. 11, 30-50; #2797 in the catalog) by Avigdor Shinan, "Divrei ha-Yamim shel Mosh ■ Rabeinu," *Ha-Sifrut* 24 (1977): 111.
79. Cited in Shinan, "Divrei ha-Yamim," 102, n. 21.
80. For Arabic-language treatments, see Rotter, "Stellung Des Negers," 141-52, and the thorough literary history provided by Muḥammad ibn 'Abdalbāqī al-Buḥārī al-Makkī in the Foreword to his work defending Blacks, *A Many-Colored Splendid Raiment: On the Good Qualities of the Abyssinians* (written in 1583-84; Muḥammad ibn 'Abdalbāqī al-Buḥārī al-Makkī, *Buntes Prachtgewand: Über die Guten Eigenschaften der Abessinier*, translated and edited by Max Weisweiler [Hannover: Orient-Buchhandlung Heinz Lafaire, 1924], 29-37).
81. Rotter, "Stellung Des Negers," 144.
82. Cited in Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 1:337.
83. Cited in Rotter, "Stellung Des Negers," 147; William McKee Evans, "From the Land of Canaan to the Land of Guinea," *AHR* 85, no. 1 (February 1980): 33.
84. Werner Sollors, *Neither Black Nor White Yet Both: Thematic Explorations of Interracial Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 97; Rotter, "Stellung Des Negers," 145.

85. See Jack Pearl Lewis, *A Study of the Interpretation of Noah and the Flood in Jewish and Christian Literature* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1968), 178; Braude, "Sons of Noah," 133. Examples include the Aquitanian Sulpicius Severus (ca. 360–ca. 425; cited in Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 2:406); a ninth-century Carolingian manuscript (Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 2:507); the Middle High German Vienna Genesis (ca. 1075; Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 2:592); Honorius von Autun (ca. 1123; Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 3:655); the Vorauer Genesis (ca. 1130/40; Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 3:666); the Middle High German author Lucidarius (ca. 1190; Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 3:673); the Sacherspiegel (1220; Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 3:761); Jansen Enikel, *Welchchronik* (ca. 1276; Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 3:834); Jean Gerson (1363–1429), *Opera omnia* (1417; Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 4:990); Canon Andrew of Wintown (ca. 1350–ca. 1425), *The Orygynale Cronykil of Scotland* (1390–1406?; Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 4:1009).
86. Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 1:276.
87. *Ibid.*, 1:290.
88. *Cursor Mundi*, 126–27, 130–31.
89. *Ibid.*, 128–29.
90. Steven A. Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery: Color, Ethnicity, and Human Bondage in Italy* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2001), 178.
91. Alfonso X., *General estoria*, 1:36 (bk. 2, ch. 12).
92. *Ibid.*, 1:52 (bk. 2, ch. 29).
93. *Ibid.*, 1:52–54 (bk. 2, chs. 29–30).
94. Álvaro Pais, *Espelho dos reis*, 2 vols., translated and edited by Miguel de Meneses (Lisbon: Inst. de Alta Cultura, 1963), 1:51.
95. *Ibid.*, 1:13.
96. *Ibid.*, 1:9.
97. *Ibid.*, 1:11.
98. The Portuguese author who cited Tostado remains anonymous; see "Explicação Porque São Os Negros Negros," MS Cod. 491 (Biblioteca Geral da Universidade Coimbra, n.d.), fols. 142–44, cited in A. C. de C. M. Saunders, *Black Slaves and Freedmen in Portugal, 1441–1555* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 190, n. 24. Saunders dated this document between 1579 and 1671, but since it referred to the first book of Solórzano's *De Indiarum Jure*, which appeared in 1629, it must have been written after that year. I have not been able to ascertain whether Tostado himself referred to Ham or Blackness in his works, which are not easily accessible in libraries in the United States. Tostado skipped over the entire story of Noah (and much else) in his retelling of the Genesis narratives in Alonso Tostado, *Las XIII questiones* (Anvers, 1555), bk. 1, ch. 5.
99. Noah cursed Cam, according to Lopez de Palacio Rubios, who then cited the biblical verse in which Canaan was cursed (Juan Lopez de Palacios Rubios, *De las islas del mar océano*, edited and translated by Agustín Millares Carlo [Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1954], 30–31 [ch. 2]).
100. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I. IIae. q. 150, art. 4 and I. IIae. q. 108, art. 4.
101. Serafim da Silva Neto, ed., *Bíblia medieval portuguesa*, in *Vól. 1: Historias d'abreviado testamento velho, segundo a meestre das historias scolasticas* (Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Nacional do Livro, 1958), 32 (Gen., chs. 30 and 31).

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120. Ibn Ezra's comments can be found in Avraham ibn Ezra, *Shnei Perushei R. Avraham ibn Ezra le-Trei-Asar: Mahadura Mada'it Mevo'eret: ha-Perush ha-Mekubal al-pi Ktav-Yad Montefiori ve-"Shita Aheret" she-Adayin lo Ra'ata Or*, edited by Uriel Simon (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1989), ad loc. Amos 9:7. In his own commentary to the Torah, R. David Kimḥi (known as Radak; 1160?-1235?; Narbonne) cited Ibn Ezra citing Yefet nearly verbatim, without anywhere disputing or qualifying the opinion (ad loc. Amos 9:7). In later centuries, the opinion was even cited by Jewish authors both in the name of Radak and Ibn Ezra; see Chapters 5 and 10.
121. Jerome (342-420) listed the Ethiopians, along with the Persians, Medes, and Indians, as sexually amoral people who "mate with their mothers and grandmothers, with their daughters and nieces" (*Adversus Jovianum*, II, ch. 7; cited in George Boas, *Primitivism and Related Ideas in the Middle Ages* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1948], 131). Muṭahhar ibn Ṭāhir al-Maqdisī (tenth century) asserted that some of the nomadic tribes living between the Nile and the Red Sea had "no marriage among them; the child does not know his father" (translated in Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, 52). These kinds of accusations may well derive from classical statements such as that of third-century geographer Caius Julius Solinus regarding the Garamante, who "use their women in common" (cited in William B. Cohen, *The French Encounter with Africans: White Response to Blacks, 1530-1880* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1980], 1).
122. Hadasah Shy, ed., *Perush Tanhum ben Yosef ha-Yerushalmi le-Trei-Asar: Hehedirah lefi Ktav-Yad Bodli she-be-Oksford* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Hebrew University Press, 1991), ad loc. Amos 9:7.
123. Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Isa. 20:4.
124. Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, 52.
125. Repeated by such writers as Brunetto Latini, Dante's teacher (translated in W. G. L. Randles, *L'image du sud-est africain dans la littérature européenne au XVIe siècle* [Lisbon: Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos, 1959], 156); the traveler Leo of Rozmital (*The Travels of Leo of Rozmital . . . , 1465-1467*, edited and translated by Malcolm Letts, Hakluyt Society, 2d Series, vol. 108 [Cambridge: Hakluyt Society Publications, 1957], 112-13). W. G. L. Randles even cited a Chinese author, Ou-Yang Hsiu, who presented the uncivilized sexuality of the eastern Africans in 1060 (Randles, *L'image du sud-est africain*, 158).
126. This cluster of lacking attributes was applied to the African Garamontes, known from classical antiquity, by the author of the fourteenth-century Portuguese *Orto do Esposo* (cited in Silva Horta, "Imagem Do Africano," 47-48). Joannes Boemus aimed it at the classical African Ichthiophagi (Joannes Boemus, *Manners, Laws and Customs of All Nations: With a Short History of the Ethiopians* by Aston, translated by E. Aston [London, 1611], 48; also in the first Latin edition of Boemus [1536], according to Randles, *L'image du sud-est africain*, 156).
127. The Hebrew letter was first published in E. Carmoly, "Toldot Don Yitshak Abravanel," *Otsar Nehmad* 2 (1857): 69-70. Franz Kobler modified the passage somewhat in his translation:

The wife who has been destined by the Lord to thy servant Isaac spoke to me: "My dear, the Lord has given thee the pleasure of being able to send to my lord something that thou thyself hast made as a kind gift and friendly sign of affection. Why shall I stand back in his house where

the scholars assemble, and not offer him a present? As I do not know of a book, I have chosen a young and beautiful Moorish slave-girl, able to work well and also to entertain in our fashion: I want to send her to his wife in order that she may remember me in her presence with feminine love, as he will remember thee." I obeyed her voice! The Doctor will bring thee the girl. She has always served faithfully in this house, too.

(Franz Kobler, ed., *A Treasury of Letters: Letters from the Famous and the Humble*, 2 vols. [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1953], 1:324.)

128. For the base of predominantly laudatory Greek views of Ethiopians, see Snowden, *Before Color Prejudice*, 56 and passim; for Rabbinic texts, see Isaac, "Genesis," 3-17.
129. Yeshayahu da Trani, *Perush Nevi'im u-Ketuvim*, 3 vols., edited by Avraham Yosef Wertheim (Jerusalem: Ktav Yad va-Sefer, 1959-78), ad loc. Song of Songs 5:10.
130. See Jefim Schirmann, "Der Neger und die Negerin: Zur Bildersprache und Stoffwahl der Spanisch-Hebräischen Dichtung," *Monatsschrift für Geschichte und Wissenschaft Des Judentums* (1931): 481-92.
131. See Elkan Nathan Adler, *Jewish Travellers in the Middle Ages: 19 Firsthand Accounts*, originally published in 1930 (New York: Dover Press, 1987), 58-59.
132. Efra'im b. R. Shimshon, *Perush Rabeinu Efra'im b. R. Shimshon u-Gedolei Ashkenaz ha-Kadmonim al ha-Torah* (Jerusalem, 1992), in the Ashkenazic script variant only, ad loc. Gen. 6:10.
133. General expressions of Abravanel's wealth are cited in Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 270, n. 47.
134. Elias Lipiner, *Tivo Portuguese Exiles in Castile: Dom David Negro and Dom Isaac Abravanel* (Jerusalem: The Magnes Press/The Hebrew University, 1997), 51.
135. See the royal privilege printed in *ibid.*, 106 (doc. 10).
136. *Ibid.*, 106 (doc. 10). Though given in perpetuity, the estate was confiscated by João II in 1483 because of the alleged participation of Abravanel in conspiracies aiming to dethrone him (*ibid.*, 52, 65).
137. *Ibid.*, 65, 66.
138. From the introduction to Abravanel's commentary to the Passover Haggada known as *Zevah Pesah* (= The Passover Sacrifice), cited in Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 270, n. 47.
139. Joseph Sarachek, *Don Isaac Abravanel* (New York: Bloch Publishing Co., 1938), 27.
140. Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 3. According to H. Loewe, Abravanel's father had become the king's treasurer in Lisbon around 1400 and later "managed the financial affairs" of Prince Fernão (H. Loewe, "Isaac Abravanel and His Age," in Trend and Loewe, *Isaac Abravanel: Six Lectures*, 20). I. González Llubera wrote that Abravanel's grandfather had been "almojarife of the city of Seville" (I. González Llubera, "Spain in the Age of Abravanel," in Trend and Loewe, *Isaac Abravanel: Six Lectures*, 31).
141. Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 17; Manuel Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo Monárquico Português (1415-1549): Contribuição para o Estudo das Origens Do Capitalismo Moderno*, 2 vols. [Coimbra: Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra/Instituto de Estudos Históricos Dr. António de Vasconcelos, 1963-64], 2:249, 251; Maria José Pimenta dos Tavares, *Os Judeus em Portugal no século XV*, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Vol. 1: Universidade Nova de Lisboa/Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas; vol. 2: INIC, 1982-84), 1:289.
142. Lipiner, *Tivo Portuguese Exiles*, 69, 132-34 (doc. 25).

- Astronomical Tradition: New Sources," in *Theory and Observation in Ancient and Medieval Astronomy* (London: Variorum, 1985), ch. 22; Cecil Roth, "A Note on the Astronomers of the Vecinho Family," *JQR* 27 (1936-37): 233-36. Zacuto arrived in Portugal after the 1492 expulsion from Spain; Joseph Vizinho served as physician to João II from 1481 to 1495.
168. John L. Vogt, "The Lisbon Slave House and African Trade, 1486-1521," *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 117 (1973): 3-4; A. F. C. Ryder, *Benin and the Europeans, 1485-1897* (London: Longman, 1969), 26, n. 4.
 169. Seed, *Ceremonies of Possession*, 122, n. 76, 123-24.
 170. Lawee, *Isaac Abarbanel's Stance*, 179.
 171. Abravanel, *Penish al ha-Torah*, comm. to Isa. 18:1-2; idem, *Mashmua Yeshu'a*, in *Penish al Ha-Torah*, 3:3. The land in which the ten tribes live hidden is named

for the abundance of shade there due to the great trees along the rivers, as this day testify men of the kingdom of Portugal who go there. And their whole way is along the rivers. And there are on both sides of the river trees up to the skies. And they are many-branched, such that they make on the river very long and large shade. And the ships of the Christians travel the rivers beneath these same shadows which cover the river like branches. . . . And look, they said "in vessels of papyrus," which we also learned according to recent news, that on the banks of these same rivers grow very, very large and thick canes. And the inhabitants of that land will take a cane and carve it and shape it and make from it a boat into which four or five or more people can enter. And they [the Portuguese] call them in their language *almadias* and this is their custom in all the land of Kush. And because of this it is said here in truth "and in vessels of papyrus on the water" because the canes are a species of papyrus that grows on the riverbank.

Abravanel's description of the canes perfectly paralleled that of Cada Mosto:

[T]hose who dwell upon the river Senegal, and some who are settled on the sea coast, have *zoppolies* or canoes, called *almadias* by the Portuguese, which are hollowed out of a single piece of wood, the largest of which will carry three or four men. They used these *almadies* for catching fish, and for transporting themselves up or down river.

(Alvise da Cada Mosto, "Original Journals of the Voyages of Cada Mosto, and Piedro de Cintra to the Coast of Africa; the Former in the Years 1455 and 1456, and the Latter Soon Afterwards," in *A General History and Collection of Voyages and Travels, Arranged in Systematic Order*, edited by Robert Kerr [Edinburgh/London: William Blackwood/T. Cadell, 1824], 224; Luís de Cadamosto, *Viagens* [Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa da História, 1948], 123.)

172. Emphasis added; *Travels of Leo of Rozmital*, 106-7; cited in part by Boxer, *Church Militant*, 5. From Leo one also learns that the sister of Alfonso V, Empress Eleanore of the Holy Roman Empire, whom the traveling party later visited in Wiener Neustadt, "showed the greatest delight when she saw the Moors [i.e., islamized Blacks] and apes which her brother the king of Portugal had presented to my lord" (emphasis added; *Travels of Leo of Rozmital*, 162; the second scribe has "Ethiopians and an ape," 166). The proximity here of oft-confused apes and Blacks reinforced the construction of the latter as an object akin to an exotic animal or pet.
173. Duarte Nunes de Leão (ca. 1530-1608), "Cronica, e vida del rey D. affonso o V," in *Crônicas dos reis de Portugal* (Porto: Lello & Irmão, 1975), 877 (ch. 31); Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo monárquico Português*, 1:391. Fernão died in 1470. Abravanel's nephew and son-in-law Yosef "managed the estates" of the young Duke of Viseu at the time he

- fled King João's wrath in 1484 (Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 35, 51). One wonders how long this service had lasted. By 1474 King Afonso had given administration of the trade and the title Senhor de Guiné to the crown prince, João (Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," 199, n. 84).
174. Boxer, *Church Militant*, 18; Zavala, *Servidumbre natural*.
 175. Gomes Eanes da Zurara, *Crônica de Guiné: segundo o ms. de paris*, edited by José de Bragança ([Pôrto]: Livraria Civilização, 1994), ch. 55; Saunders, *Black Slaves and Freedmen*, 149.
 176. For the development of the infrastructure administering the Guinea trade, see Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," ch. 6.
 177. Cada Mosto, "Original Journals," 213. According to explorer Diogo Gomes, Prince Henrique took 25% of all captives, but in reality often took up to 50% (Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo monárquico português*, 1:390).
 178. Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," 260. Zurara wrote (ca. 1453) about how the arriving consignments of slaves helped defuse opinion against the African nautical ventures among "people of more importance," who were "forced to turn their blame into public praise . . . as they saw the houses of others full to overflowing of male and female slaves, and their property increasing" (Gomes Eannes de Azurara, *The Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea*, 2 vols., edited and translated by Charles Raymond Beazley and Edgar Prestage, Works Issued by the Hakluyt Society, vols. 95 and 100 [London: Hakluyt Society, 1896], 2:61).
 179. Vogt, "Lisbon Slave House," 2.
 180. Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo monárquico português*, 2:191, 193.
 181. Vogt, "Lisbon Slave House," 3; Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo monárquico português*, 1:403. This clamping down came only a year after members of the Cortes, no doubt in order to share in the enormous profits, complained that the Guinea commerce should be opened to free trade (Blake, *West Africa*, 36-37; Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," 256).
 182. On the eagerness of the nobility and bourgeoisie to participate in the potentially profitable African expeditions, see Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," 183-84. Elbl correctly pointed out the upward mobility entailed in the Guinea trade for members of all classes (ibid., 343). Sailors, for example, might easily accumulate enough money to become traders in their own right. This much is true. Yet the prerequisites for being employed as a scribe, the lowest official rank, included literacy and 2,500 reis to purchase the office, both unavailable to most of the lower classes. Further, insofar as those seeking upward mobility by means of trade received incentives for the purchasing of a personal slave (exemption from customs and taxes) and private trading, they had as much reason (perhaps more) for supporting the differentiation of themselves from enslavable Blacks.
 183. Eanes da Zurara, *Crônica de Guiné*; cited in Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," 191, n. 19. The master of Da Ca da Mosto's caravel had been a burgher of Lagos, Vicente Dias (Elbl, ibid., 349, n. 4).
 184. Elbl, ibid., 184.
 185. Ibid., 313.
 186. João de Barrios, *Da Ásia*, dec. 1, bk. 2, ch. 2, cited in Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo monárquico português*, 1:400; Antônio Brásio, *Os pretos em Portugal*, Coleção Pelo Império (Lisbon: Divisão de Publicações e Biblioteca/Agência Geral das Colônias, 1944), 64; Ryder, *Benin and the Europeans*, 24; Blake, *West Africa*, 27-28. According to Vogt, Gomes had

- been named "receiver of all Moors" (among other merchandise) already in 1456 (Vogt, "Lisbon Slave House," 2; Elbl had 1455 [Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," 199, n. 81]).
187. Elbl, *ibid.*, 343.
188. Vogt, "Lisbon Slave House," 4.
189. This whole paragraph could be applied as well to Castile's fifteenth-century challenges to Portugal's monopoly in Guinea. See Peter E. Russell, "Fontes documentais castelhanas para a história da expansão portuguesa na Guiné nos últimos anos de D. Afonso V," *Do Tempo e da História* 4 (1971): 5-33; Blake, *West Africa*, 46-56.
190. Eanes da Zurara, *Crónica*, bk. 1, ch. 25.
191. *Travels of Leo of Rozmital*, 118. Perhaps this was the practice that filled the Lisbon households with slaves that Zurara, whose writing was commissioned by the Crown, had praised.
192. See Saunders, *Black Slaves and Freedmen*, esp. 146; José Ramos Tinhorão, *Os negros em Portugal: uma presença silenciosa* (Lisbon: Editorial Caminho, 1988); Dominguez Ortiz, "Esclavitud en Castilla."; Antonio Manuel González Díaz, *La Esclavitud en Ayamonte durante el antiguo régimen* (Huelva: Diputación Provincial, 1996). Members of the elite showed less readiness to marry outsiders. A 1531 census of property holders in San Juan, Puerto Rico, showed that only 2 men (out of the 138 for whom marital status can be determined) were married to Black women, and both were themselves Black (Damiani Cósimi, *Estratificación social, esclavos y naborías en el Puerto Rico minero del siglo XVI* [Río Piedras: Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1994], 96). Again, it is no coincidence that the people cited as having relations with Black women in Angola were foot soldiers. Some scholars similarly saw great affinity with and affection for Blacks among the lower classes in eighteenth-century England (Fryer, *Staying Power*, 72; Hecht, *Continental and Colonial Servants*, 46-48).
193. See Eleazar Gutwirth, "Widows, Artisans, and the Issues of Life: Hispano-Jewish Bourgeois Ideology," in *In Iberia and Beyond: Hispanic Jews Between Cultures*, edited by Bernard Dov Cooperman (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1998), 143-73.
194. Gutwirth dismissed the "aristocratic" identity of Iberian Jewish elites ("Widows, Artisans"), and Isaac Abravanel posed no exception, his touting of Davidic lineage notwithstanding. His antimonarchic, republican tendencies have long been noted, for example in his praise of the Venetian Senate. Leo Strauss nicely nuanced Abravanel's politics as "aristocracy near to democracy" (L. Strauss, "Abravanel's Philosophical Tendency," 116). See the commentaries to I Sam 8:4, 10:17; Deut. 17:14; Judges 8:7; Amos Funkenstein, *Perceptions of Jewish History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 160; Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 166-89; L. Rabinowitz, "Abravanel as Exegete," in Trend and Loewe, *Isaac Abravanel: Six Lectures*, 88-89. Abravanel's bourgeois outlook coexisted with a thoroughgoing critique of civilization and the "artificial" realm of politics, which he took from the first chapters of Genesis, on the one hand - fashion came into being with Adam's eating of the tree of knowledge; the name of Cain (קַיִן), builder of the first city, derived from the same root as acquisition (קָנָה) - and the stoics, Seneca, Josephus, and the Church Fathers, on the other (see for instance his commentary to Gen. 3:22, 4:1-8, 11:1; see Funkenstein, *Perceptions*, 165, n. 102; L. Strauss, "Abravanel's Philosophical Tendency," 109-11; Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 150-53, 157).

195. This plaint itself places Abravanel's writing of his biblical commentaries firmly in the tradition of late-medieval Iberian bourgeois practical morality and didacticism, both Jewish and non-Jewish. In the introduction to one poem, the wealthy fourteenth-century Catalanian Moses Nathan lamented how he "had had no tranquil time for contemplation. Now, in his old age, he writes this book of morals." (Gutwirth, "Widows, Artisans," 161).
196. L. Rabinowitz, "Abravanel as Exegete," 80. Gutwirth skillfully evoked the late-medieval urban guild environment in which emphasis on technique, style, and originality became an important aspect of "mastery" (Gutwirth, *ibid.*).
197. The quoted language is from L. Rabinowitz, "Abravanel as Exegete," 82; Abravanel's boast came in his Introduction to his commentary on Samuel, discussion of Pirke d'Rabi Eliezer in the first part of *Yeshu'ot Meshilho*. On humanist textual strategies, see L. D. Reynolds and N. G. Wilson, *Scribes and Scholars*, 3d ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991); John F. D'Amico, *Theory and Practice in Renaissance Textual Criticism: Beatus Rhenanus Between Conjecture and History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988); Grafton, Shelford, and Siraisi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 28-35. On Poliziano, with whose method Abravanel shows striking affinities, see Anthony Grafton, "The Scholarship of Poliziano and Its Context," in *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450-1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 47-75. Abravanel's "modern" humanism is excellently covered in Lawee, *Isaac Abravanel's Stance*.
198. Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 20; Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," 176-77, 194, n. 36. According to I. González Llubera, Abravanel was already presiding over the royal treasury during the Moroccan campaign in which Arzila and Tangiers were captured (1471) (González Llubera, "Spain in the Age of Abravanel," 32). Only in 1500, however, with the first expedition of Cabral, to which D. Álvaro of Bragança lent money, do we find mention of participation by a member of the House of Bragança in overseas activities (Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo monárquico português*, 2:208). The Duke of Bragança's opposition to João II, his suspicion as a traitor to the Crown, and the family's downfall, needless to say, helped keep them from participating until their eventual pardon. The commercial endeavors of the family instead seem to have faced toward Flanders, between Lisbon and which they operated a ship (*barinéis*) as early as 1443 (Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo monárquico português*, 2:243). Hence, Abravanel's own business interests.
199. Ryder, *Benin and the Europeans*, 28; Nunes Dias, *Capitalismo monárquico português*, 1:392-406. For a quick overview of Afonso's confused policies regarding the Guinea trade, see Elbl, "Portuguese Trade," 255-57.
200. Pimenta Ferro Tavares, *Judeus em Portugal*, 1:176-83, 296, 312.
201. Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 271, n. 69, 25.
202. I am ignoring Abravanel's career after fleeing Portugal, since he was then even less directly in contact with Guinea and Blacks. His flight from Portugal occurred in 1483, when he would have been roughly 46 years old, his attitudes presumably well developed. It is of course possible that his defense of Black sexual morals in his much-later commentary to Amos reflected a tolerance induced by the exile and wandering both he and his people had suffered since the writing of his commentary to Genesis.

203. In some texts, Abravanel favored military expansion as a sign of a state's health (*Ma'aynei ha-Yeshu'a*, 63a-b, though elsewhere he opposed unjustified military aggressiveness (Abravanel, *Penish al ha-Torah*, comm. to Deut. 17:14, 20:10).
204. Vogt, "Lisbon Slave House," 9, n. 50.
205. Ibid., 6, n. 27.
206. M. M. Bakhtin, *Rabelais and His World* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), 325.
207. Sarachek's translation of the commentary to Gen. 10:1 (Sarachek, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 26). Abravanel's configuration of Noah's three sons is reminiscent of that of Augustine, who wrote that, as Noah's middle son, Ham "separated himself, as it were, from both the others and [kept] his position between them." "The garment" with which Shem and Yefet cover Noah "stands for a mystery; the blacks symbolize the memory of past events; for this, we may be sure, is now the time when 'Japhet lives in the house of Shem' and the wicked brother lives between them" (*De Civitate Dei*, bk. 16, ch. 2).
208. This was Yefet Almosnino (d. 1568), brother of the famous Salonika rabbi, preacher, and writer Moshe Almosnino (Meir Zvi Bnaya, *Mosheh Almosnino of Salonika: His Life and Work* [Hebrew] [Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University, 1996], 17, 14).
209. Abravanel, *Penish al ha-Torah*, ad loc.
210. Ibid., ad loc. Gen. 23: 19-24.

Chapter 2

1. See Solomon Grayzel, *The Church and the Jews in the XIIIth Century: A Study Based on Their Relations During the Years 1198-1254, Based on the Papal Letters and the Conciliar Decrees of the Period* (Philadelphia: Dropsie College for Hebrew and Cognate Learning, 1933), 22-26; B. Blumenkrenz, "The Roman Church and the Jews," in *Essential Papers on Judaism and Christianity in Conflict: From Late Antiquity to the Reformation*, edited by Jeremy Cohen (New York: New York University Press, 1991), 193-230; David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress*, 90. Medieval Christian Europe, according to Israel Abrahams, "distinguished between slave-holding and slave-dealing by Jews; it suppressed the former, but did not set its face against the latter" (Israel Abrahams, *Jewish Life in the Middle Ages* [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1911], 98).
2. *Siete Partidas*, pt. 4, tit. 21; pt. 7, tit. 24.
3. E. H. Lindo, *The History of the Jews of Spain and Portugal*, reprint of New York, 1848 ed. (New York: Burt Franklin, 1970), 126, 139, 163.
4. Lindo, *History*, 168.
5. Ibid., 193.
6. Ibid., 197.
7. Ibid., 203.
8. Dennis Romano, *Housecraft and Statecraft: Domestic Service in Renaissance Venice, 1400-1600* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), 98.
9. David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress*, 91-93; Salo Wittmayer Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, 18 vols. (New York/Philadelphia: Columbia University Press/Jewish Publication Society of America, 1952-83), 3:214, 4:191-93, 336-37.
10. Simhah Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading Among Jews in the Middle Ages" [Hebrew], *Zion* 4 (1939): 106-10, 109, n. 124, 109, n. 126; Yitzhak Baer, *A History of the Jews in*

- Christian Spain*, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961), 1:94, 141-42, 181-82, 211, 255, 259-60, 313-14, 364, 376, 415, n. 79, 2:48, 95-96. The agricultural productivity of thirteenth-century Jews on Majorca depended on Moorish slaves (Yitzhak Baer, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:141). The Jewish cemetery at Montjuich, Barcelona, used between 1091 and 1391, houses three graves containing the skeletal remains of Blacks, according to A. Prevosti, "Estudio tipológico de los restos humanos hallados en la necrópolis judiaca de Montjuich (Barcelona)," *Sefarad* 11 (1951): 82. The Sarajevo Haggadah, probably written around 1350 in Aragon, has an illustration of a Black woman sitting at the foot of a Jewish family's Passover table (*Sarajevska Hagada*, facsimile ed., with an introduction by E. Verber [Belgrade/Sarajevo: Prosveta/Svjetlost, 1983], 35).
11. Yitzhak Baer, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:141-42.
 12. *Siete Partidas*, pt. 7, tit. 24, law 10; Baer, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:182, n. 79.
 13. Saunders, *Black Slaves and Freedmen*, 62. Saunders did not, however, produce any evidence of such slaveholding. Though overstated and unsupportable in his overstatement, since he confused Jews and New Christians, Joseph C. Miller agreed: "Portugal's sixteenth-century slave trade - and the ownership of slaves themselves - ... originated as a refuge for Jews, gypsies, exiles, and others excluded from more attractive currents of its Asian and African commerce" (Joseph C. Miller, "A Marginal Institution on the Margin of the Atlantic System: The Portuguese Southern Atlantic Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century," in *Slavery and the Rise of the Atlantic System*, edited by Barbara Solow [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press/W.E.B. DuBois Institute for Afro-American Research, Harvard University, 1991], 126).
 14. Cited in Stuart B. Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants, and Rebels: Reconsidering Brazilian Slavery* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992), 158, n. 8. In this case, "the owner was required to inform the parish priest and the slave was required to state his desire to remain unbaptized before witnesses in order for the slaveowner to avoid confiscation of the slave," as stipulated by the *Ordenações* for failure to baptize a slave.
 15. Blumenthal, "Implements of Labor," 142 and 142, n. 296.
 16. Translated in Blumenthal, "Implements of Labor," 371.
 17. Renée Levine Melammed, "Some Death and Mourning Customs of Castilian Conversas," in *Exile and Diaspora: Studies in the History of the Jewish People Presented to Professor Haim Beinart* (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute of Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi/the Hebrew University of Jerusalem/Consejo de Investigaciones Científicas, Madrid, 1991), 120-21.
 18. *Livros das cortes 19-45, Aclamações e côrtes*, 14-15 sec., ANTT, Arch. A. 46 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 5302, unpaginated; cited also in Pimenta Ferro Tavares, *Judeus em Portugal*, 1:246, and see 1:297; Saunders, *Black Slaves and Freedmen*, 63.
 19. Ruth Lamdan, *The Holding of Maidservants in the Jewish Community in Israel, Syria and Egypt in the Sixteenth Century* [Hebrew] (Tel Aviv: University of Tel Aviv Press, 1996), 360.
 20. Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 109-10; Yitzhak Baer, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:415-17, n. 79.
 21. The quotation is from Baer, *Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:211, 314; Renzo Toaff, "Schiavitù e schiavi nella Nazione Ebraica di Livorno nel Sei e Settecento," *La Rassegna Mensile di Israel* 51, no. 1 (January-April 1985): 83. Don Samuel Ha-Levi, treasurer to King

- Pedro (reigned 1350-69), whose sudden arrest and subsequent death in prison typified the working conditions of Jewish servants to royalty, was said to possess "large tracts of land . . . and eighty Moslem slaves" (Yitzhak Baer, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:364). Community leader Abraham Senior (fifteenth century) had considerable land holdings in Pinillos (Gutwirth, "Widows, Artisans" 145, 165, n. 6). Jewish landowning should not be exaggerated; note Gutwirth's citation of "contemptuous treatment of the archetypal judaizing converso for his lack of *solar* (inherited family estate)" in fifteenth-century Spanish writing (*ibid.*, 145).
22. Eliahu Ashtor mentioned Jewish slave dealers in eleventh-century Andalusia and outlined Jewish trading of slaves from Slavic lands (Eliahu Ashtor, *The Jews of Moslem Spain*, 2 vols. [Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1992], 1:285-90, 2:201). Jewish slave trading was thoroughly minimized by Toch, "Jews of Europe," 35-63.
 23. Ricard Soto i Company (Richard Soto et al.), "Algunes consideracions sobre el paper dels jueus en la colonització de mallorca durant el segle XIII," in *Sobre jueus i conversos de les balears* (Palma de Mallorca: Lleonard Muntaner Editor, 1999), 28-29 and Appendix 3.
 24. *The Jews of Tortosa 1373-1492: Regesta of Documents from the Archivo Histórico de Protocolos de Tarragona*, compiled by Josefina Cubells i Llorens, Sources for the History of the Jews in Spain, vol. 3 (Jerusalem: Central Archives for the History of the Jewish People/Hebrew University, 1991), docs. 301, 336. In fifteenth-century Lisbon, as well, those private contractors (*corretors*) who usually purchased large lots of slaves from the Casa dos Escravos often combined this traffic with the sale of livestock (Vogt, "Lisbon Slave House," 11).
 25. Mark D. Meyerson, "The Economic Life of the Jews of Murviedro in the Fifteenth Century," in *In Iberia and Beyond: Hispanic Jews Between Cultures*, edited by Bernard Dov Cooperman (Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1998), 81, 93, n. 77.
 26. Klaus Wagner, *Regesto de documentos del archivo de protocolos de Sevilla referentes a judíos y moros* (Seville: Universidad de Sevilla, 1978), 53 (doc. 204).
 27. See CAHJP microfilm HM2 530 = Livros das cortes 19-45, Aclamações e côrtes, 14-15 sec. This must be what Maria Pimento Ferro Tavares meant in writing that João II (reigned 1481-1495) restricted Jewish slave trading, limiting them to dealing in North African Muslims, whom they continued to acquire by ransoming and then selling them (Pimenta Ferro Tavares, *Judeus em Portugal*, 1:297).
 28. Haim Gerber, *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Century: Economy and Society* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem, 1983), 14-17; *idem*, "On the Jews of Constantinople in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" [Hebrew], *Pe'anim* 12 (1982): 27-46.
 29. Lamdan, *Holding of Maidservants*, 364.
 30. In 1570, *dhimmi*s in Egypt were forced to sell their Muslim maidservants to Muslims (*ibid.*, 359).
 31. Shmuel ben Moshe de Medina, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot*, 3 vols. (Salonika: Hayyim Avraham ben Shabtai and S'adi ben Yeudah ha-Levi Ashkenazi, 1797-98), vol. 2, responsum no. 218.
 32. David ben Shlomo ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot*, Pt. 8: *mi-K"Y* (Bnei Brak: Eit Sofer, 1975), responsa no. 955, 1156. For two similar examples from Ottoman Palestine, see Ovadia Salama, "Slaves in the Ownership of Jews and Christians in Ottoman Jerusalem"

- [Hebrew], *Cathedra* 49 (1989): 67. For Haleb, Syria, ca. 1574/5 see Lamdan, *Holding of Maidservants*, 359.
33. For instance, a 1594/5 Ottoman decree sent to Haleb (Aleppo), Syria, prohibited only the holding of slaves with Muslim names (Haim Gerber, *Economic and Social Life of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire in the 16th and 17th Centuries* [Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center for the Furtherance of the Study of Jewish History/Historical Society of Israel, 1982], 102-3 [doc. 29]; Salama, "Slaves," 65). In 1610, the Jews of Istanbul (rabbanite and karaite) asked for and received permission to hold women slaves too old to give birth and to pay a tax for the privilege. A document dating from 1689 indicates that the holding of slaves was not forbidden to Jews and Christians, but only taxed (Gerber, *Economic and Social Life*, 120 [doc. 49]; Salama, "Slaves," 66; Lamdan, *Holding of Maidservants*, 356).
 34. Yvonne Seng, "A Liminal State: Slavery in Sixteenth-Century Istanbul," in *Slavery in the Islamic Middle East*, edited by Shaun E. Marmon (Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1999), 39, n. 18. See the Sultanic decree from 1689 Constantinople printed in Gerber, *Economic and Social Life*, 15, 120 (doc. 49).
 35. Salama, "Slaves," 64; Lamdan, *Holding of Maidservants*, 357. Unfortunately these authors provided little corroborating evidence.
 36. Kobler, *Treasury of Letters*, 1:338; A. Ya'ari, *Letters from the Land of Israel* [Hebrew] (Ramat Gan: Masadah, 1971), 185.
 37. Amnon Cohen, Elisheva Simon-Pikali, and Ovadia Salama, *Jews in the Moslem Religious Court: Society, Economy and Communal Organization in the XVIIIth Century: Documents from Ottoman Jerusalem* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi, 1996), 336.
 38. Gerber, *Jews of the Ottoman Empire*, 82-83 (docs. 2-3); Lamdan, *Holding of Maidservants*, 356.
 39. Seng, "Liminal State," 31.
 40. Eliahu Strauss, *History of the Jews in Egypt and Syria Under the Mamluk Regime* [Hebrew], 2 vols. (Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1951), 2:235.
 41. David ben Shlomo ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot*: Pts. 1-7, photo reprint of Warsaw, 1882 ed. (Jerusalem: N.p., 1972), pt. 1, responsum no. 196 ("My eyes have seen many times with these Ethiopian maidservants"); pt. 4, responsum no. 1,360 (the maidservants of the Jews are "of the sect of idol-worshippers"); pt. 3, responsum no. 955 ("Reuven who had bought a Muslim maidservant and immersed her for the sake of enslavement . . .").
 42. Michael Winter, "The Jews of Egypt in the Ottoman Period According to Turkish and Arabic Sources" [Hebrew], *Pe'anim* 16 (1983): 17.
 43. Winter, "Jews of Egypt," 17-18.
 44. J. O. Hunwick, "Black Slaves in the Mediterranean World: An Introduction to a Neglected Aspect of the African Diaspora," *Slavery & Abolition* 13, no. 1 (April 1992): 13.
 45. See "A Legal Ruling [Fifteenth Century]," translated in Bernard Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, 148.
 46. Verlinden, *Beginnings of Modern Colonization*, 28; Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 34-44, 54-64.
 47. Samuel Freiherr von Pufendorf, *Of the Law of Nature and Nations*, 2d English ed. (London: Printed by L. Litchfield, for A. and J. Churchill, 1710), bk. 3, ch. 2, and bk. 6, ch. 3, respectively.
 48. Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 157.

49. Renata Segre, "Sephardic Refugees in Ferrara: Two Notable Families," in *Crisis and Creativity in the Sephardic World, 1391-1648*, edited by Benjamin R. Gampel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 182.
50. Copy of the lettres-patentes found among the incoming mail of the Portuguese Parnasim at Amsterdam, CAHJP microfilm reel HM2 1565a = Ingekomen stukken bij parnassim, 1643-1810, Parnassim van de Gemeente Talmud Tora, GAA 334, No. 66.
51. Toaff, Renzo, "Schiavitù = schiavi," 84-85. Thanks to Nadia Zeldes for translating this essay for me.
52. Haim Beinart, *In the Path of Exiles and Forced Converts*, a collection of sources for a seminar [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Hebrew University, 1968), 140.
53. Toaff, Renzo, "Schiavitù e schiavi," 84. Toaff cited the *Collezione degli Ordini Municipali di Livorno = Statuti di Mercanzia di Firenze*, Giorgi, Livorno (1798; repr. anastatica Forni, 1980), 233-56.
54. Toaff, Renzo, "Schiavitù = schiavi," 84.
55. Jonathan I. Israel, "Menasseh Ben Israel and the Dutch Sephardic Colonization Movement of the Mid-Seventeenth Century (1645-1657)," in *Menasseh Ben Israel and His World*, edited by Yosef Kaplan, Henry Méchoulan, and Richard H. Popkin (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1989), 141-42.
56. Council of State, Day's Proceedings, Nov. 13, 1655, Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series; reprinted in H. Adler, "A Homage to Menasseh Ben Israel," *TJHSE* 1 (1893/94): Appendix B.
57. Michael Studemund-Halévy, *Biographisches Lexikon der Hamburger Sefarden: Die Grabinschriften Des Portugiesenfriedhofs an der Königstrasse in Hamburg-Altona* (Hamburg: Christians Verlag, 2000), 22, 133, n. 106.
58. Toaff, Renzo, "Schiavitù e schiavi," 85. Note the careful wording, "born Christians," which excluded converts to Christianity, a sign of the low emphasis here placed on conversion.
59. Segre, "Sephardic Refugees," 182.
60. Beinart, *Path of Exiles*, 143 (doc. 29).
61. Hermann Kellenbenz, *Sephardim an der Unteren Elbe: Ihre Wirtschaftliche und Politische Bedeutung Vom Ende Des 16. Bis Zum Beginn Des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1958), 64.
62. B. N. Teensma, "Fragmenten Uit Het Amsterdamse Convoluut Van Abraham Idaña, Alias Gaspar Méndez del Arroyo (1623-1690)," *SR* 11, no. 2 (July 1977): 152.
63. Shlomo Simohnssohn, *History of the Jews in the Duchy of Mantua* (Jerusalem: Kiryath Sepher, 1977), 159, n. 179.
64. For example: Letter from the Director of the Amsterdam Chamber of the Dutch West India Company to Stuyvesant, 24 July 1653; printed in Max J. Kohler, "The Jews and the American Anti-Slavery Movement," *PAJHS* 5 (1897): 141-42.
65. Herbert Friedenwald, "Material for the History of the Jews in the British West Indies," *PAJHS* 5 (1897): 66.
66. Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 23.
67. Arnold Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), 92; José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello, *Gente da nação: cristãos-novos e judeus em Pernambuco, 1542-1654* (Recife: Fundação Joaquim Nabuco/Editora Massangana, 1989), 260.

68. Cited in Max J. Kohler, "Phases of Jewish Life in New York Before 1800," *PAJHS* 2 (1894): 84. As can be seen from the inclusion of Catholic Spaniards, societies' Others needed to be barred from signs of status that would elevate them to the ruling elite's level. A 1670 Virginia law, for instance, "prohibited free blacks, even if Christians themselves, from buying Christian servants": "noe negroe or Indian though baptised and enjoined their owne ffreedom shall be capable of any . . . purchase of christians, but yet [are] not debarred from buying any of their owne nation" (Alden T. Vaughan, *Roots of American Racism: Essays on the Colonial Experience* [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995], 151, 170).
69. Minutes and notes of meetings of Senhores do Mahamad, entry of Tuesday, 25 February 1777, microfilm reel 527, fol. 345, AJA. The parnasim lost no time in protesting this breach of their privileges.
70. Minutes and notes of meetings of Senhores do Mahamad, entry of Thursday, 28 March 1771, microfilm reel 527, fols. 70-71, AJA.
71. Bertram Wallace Korn, "Slave Trade," in *EJ* (Jerusalem: Keter Publishing, 1971), 14:1662.
72. See, for example, the tumult created around his coachman in Altona in 1619 (Studemund-Halévy, *Biographisches Lexikon*, 22-23).
73. In an article that came to my attention just as this manuscript was going to press, Lydia Hagoot, a researcher at the Gemeentearchief in Amsterdam, stated that the Portuguese Jews of sixteenth-century Antwerp had had legal problems concerning their slaves. Hence, I do not want to overstate my case. See Brigitte Tillema, "Zwarte slaaf in grachtenpand," *Nieuw Israelietisch Weekblad*, 18 October 2002: 3.
74. A. S. Diamond, "Problems of the London Sephardi Community, 1720-1733," *TJHSE* 21 (1962/67): 50 To be sure, these immigrants were considered Christians.
75. A. S. Diamond, "The Community of the Resettlement, 1656-1684: A Social Survey," *TJHSE* 24 (1970/73): 144.
76. Lucien Wolf, "The Jewry of the Restoration, 1660-1664," *TJHSE* 5 (1902/1905): 7.
77. *El Libro de los Actados: Being the Records and Accompts of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of London from 1663 to 1681*, translated by Lionel D. Barnett (Oxford: Board of Elders of the Congregation/Oxford University Press, 1931), 10. It is unclear to me of Elders of the Congregation/Oxford University Press, 1931), 10. It is unclear to me whether the use of the term "Goy" (= non-Jew) for outsiders should be taken to imply that these serving women were considered Jewish. The exact meaning of how these goyim were used is also unclear: Perhaps Jews seeking to lure away a competitor's maidservant employed an unrecognized non-Jew to visit and negotiate or employed a non-Jewish man to get the maid into trouble with her mistress. Albert M. Hyamson agreed that "the wording . . . is somewhat obscure" (Albert M. Hyamson, *The Sephardim of England* [London: Methuen & Co., 1951], 29). The issue was not merely theoretical, however. A case of maid stealing arose in mid-seventeenth-century New Amsterdam: Trader and butcher Asser Levy (successfully) sued one Balthazar Bayart, whose wife had persuaded a maidservant working for Levy's wife to leave before the end of her contract and enter her own service (see Berthold Fernow, ed., *The Records of New Amsterdam from 1653 to 1674*, 7 vols. [New York: Published under the authority of the city by the Knickerbocker Press, 1897], 5:176, 183, 188; Leon Hühner, "Asser Levy: A Noted Jewish Burgher of New Amsterdam," *PAJHS* 8 [1900]: 18, n. 1).
78. Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, 70.

79. Ibid., 72; see also Mello, *Gente da nação*, 233–38; Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 133–34.
80. C. R. Boxer, *The Dutch in Brazil, 1624–1654* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 114.
81. Mello, *Gente da nação*, 233, table between 234 and 235; see also Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 133, n. 52.
82. Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, 72–73; Mello, *Gente da nação*, 236.
83. Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, 133; idem, *The Records of the Earliest Jewish Community in the New World* (New York: American Jewish Historical Society, 1954), 28: "For Negro slaves bought from the West India Company which held the import monopoly, the tax was five soldos per each slave." The tax on each case of white sugar was eight soldos; on each case of *mascauado* (dark sugar) it was six soldos, four soldos on each case of *panela*, the worst sugar.
84. In 1610, Pedro Rodrigues Vega, a Portuguese Jew residing in Amsterdam, transferred his plantation Santo Cosmas to his brother Manuel. At this time the plantation included 62 slaves, about 40 oxen, 2 boats, copperware, and further necessities for making sugar (E. M. Koen, W. Hamelink-Verweel, S. Hart, and W. C. Pieterse, "Notarial Records in Amsterdam Relating to the Portuguese Jews in That Town up to 1639," *SR* 5, no. 2 [July 1971], nos. 449 and 450, 27 December 1610). Daniel Swetschinski mentioned two Amsterdam Jews who "are known to have possessed sugar mills in Brazil: Domingos da Costa Brandão and his wife, Maria Henriques Brandoa, (who authorized Joseph de Abraham Lumbroso to travel to Brazil and manage their sugar mill) and David do Vale (who had inherited a sugar mill from his brother, Felipe Dias do Vale)" (Daniel M. Swetschinski, "The Portuguese Jewish Merchants of Seventeenth-Century Amsterdam: A Social Profile" [Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 1979], 201). Another scholar listed eight Amsterdam Sephardic families named as owners of Brazilian *engenhos* in a 1623 report by José Israel da Costa (Hannedea van Nederveen Meerkerk, *Recife: The Rise of a 17th-Century Trade City from a Cultural-Historical Perspective* [Assen: Van Gorcum, 1989], 196).
85. Mello, *Gente da nação*, 225; Böhm, *Sefardíes*, 73–75; Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, 70. Two more purchasers, listed as Portuguese Christians, possessed unclear religious affiliations: One was later accused and condemned as a judaizer, the other mistakenly listed as a Jew, according to Mello, *Gente da nação*, 249, n. 30. On 15 June 1637: Vicente Rodrigues Vila Real bought the plantation Guararapes for 42,000 florins, including 20 Blacks (Mello, *Gente da nação*, 225). The *Dagelijkse Notulen* for 9 June of the same year indicates that the plantation was going to be sold to Moisés Navarro and an unidentified partner for 30,000 florins. This record states that the plantation has sufficient lands for planting cane, all its buildings in ruin, 21 slaves, no cows nor corn (Mello, *Gente da nação*, 249, n. 31). On 17 June 1637: David Senior Coronel or Duarte Saraiva contracted to buy two plantations, the Old Plantation of Beberibe for 10,000 florins and the plantation Bom Jesus for 60,000 florins. On 23 June he agreed to buy the plantation Novo for 42,000 florins (Mello, *Gente da nação*, 225–26). In 1638 Saraiva acquired part of the plantation Tower (*Eugenho da Torre*), in Várzea do Capibaribe, and the lands of the Camaçari plantation in Jaboatão. In 1639 he acquired the plantation São João Salgado (Mello, *Gente da nação*, 226). On 18 June 1637: Moisés Navarro contracted to buy the plantation Juriçaca for 45,000 (Mello, *Gente da nação*, 226); 23 June 1637: Diogo Dias Brandão agreed to buy the plantation Pirapama for 40,000 florins (ibid.). Hannedea Meerkerk lists thirteen Sephardic owners (Meerkerk,

- Recife*, 196). Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, 144, wrote that "most of the Dutch who bought plantations in the 1637–8 boom apparently sold out later to Portuguese or Jews." He produced no evidence of these Jewish purchases, but perhaps based himself on contemporary Portuguese complaints (see note 86). Boxer repeatedly mixed "Jew" with "New Christian" in his writings, so he may have had the latter in mind.
86. Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, 70. Certain disgruntled Portuguese residents complained by letter to Dom João IV that "Recife was full of Jews, and many lived now by the patronage of the field, and were masters of the *engenhos* which they had usurped from the residents with their diabolical clothes moths [*traças*, i.e., consuming ways], plots and usury" (Diogo Lopes de Santiago, *História da guerra de Pernambuco e feitos memoráveis do mestre de campo João Fernandes Vieira herói digno de eterna memória, primeiro aclamador da guerra*, 1^a ed. integral [Recife: Fundação do Patrimônio Histórico e Artístico de Pernambuco/Diretoria de Assuntos Culturais, 1984], 201). Clearly they had the handful of purchasers mentioned in note 85 in mind, but their motives for exaggeration cannot be dismissed.
87. Mello, *Gente da nação*, 239. Cited from his trial before the Lisbon Inquisition, ANTT processo 11.575.
88. Mello, *Gente da nação*, 241.
89. Gary A. Puckrein, *Little England: Plantation Society and Anglo-Barbadian Politics, 1627–1700* (New York: New York University Press, 1984), 147. Around 1664, one John Hassel owned 20 slaves; David de Mercado owned 11. It should be noted that more or less 3% of all Barbadian slaves were owned by individuals who held no land (ibid., 149).
90. Ibid., 147.
91. Faber, *Slavery and the Jews*, 13, based on Richard S. Dunn, "The Barbados Census of 1680: Profile of the Richest Colony in English America," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d. Series, 26 (1969): 22.
92. Faber, *Jews, Slaves, and the Slave Trade*, 100.
93. *Acts of Assembly, Passed in the Island of Barbadoes, from 1648 to 1718, Part I* (London: John Baskett, 1732), 123–25 (Act no. 329).
94. N. Darnell Davis, "Notes on the History of the Jews in Barbados," *PAJHS* 18 (1909): 144.
95. Friedenwald, "Material," 60.
96. Stephen Alexander Fortune, *Merchants and Jews: The Struggle for British West Indian Commerce, 1650–1750* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1984), 161.
97. Printed in Friedenwald, "Material," 89–90.
98. Faber, *Jews, Slaves, and the Slave Trade*, 85.
99. Ibid., 86.
100. Ibid., 86.
101. Ibid., 88.
102. A list of "The Jews Plantations and houses in Jamaica" reveals that Mr. Karbona has a Plantation in Leganee [?] wh[ic]h he has bought and paid for. Mr. Solomon Gabay has a Plantation for many yeares in magitt Savana. Mr. Joseph Ridana has a Plantation in ye same place. Mr. Solomon Acton has a Plantation in ye North Side in Port Mary. Mr. Abraham Gabay has a Plantation in white hood. Mr. Benjamen Corvalo has a Plantation in ye same place. Mr. Moses Jessurun Cardezo has 15 houses. Mr. Joseph da Costa Alvaringa has 10 houses. Mr. David Alvarez. Mr. Jacob Mendez Gutierrez. Mr. Jacob Detorez. Mrs. Sarrah Gabay.

- (Calendar of State Papers, Colonial Series, America and West Indies 1689/92, 593; printed in Jacob A. P. M. Andrade, *A Record of the Jews in Jamaica from the English Conquest to the Present Time* [Kingston: The Jamaica Times Ltd., 1941], 8.)
103. Quoted in George Fortunatus Judah, "The Jews' Tribute in Jamaica: Extracted from the Journals of the House of Assembly of Jamaica," *PAJHS* 18 (1909): 152. In the third of these petitions, one Jacob Mendes Gutteres stands out by name (Thursday, 13 January 1731/2; quoted in Judah, "Jews' Tribute," 155). The fourth petition referenced the fact that "a number of Jews" own "plantations lands and houses" (and that others are "esteemed the best distillers in several plantations") (Friday, 16 March 1738/9; quoted in Judah, "Jews' Tribute," 157-60). The 90 or so signatories of this last petition included non-Jews and simply cannot be those of Jewish planters only. A 1741 speech to the House by the Chief Justice mentioned that "the planters among them do not exceed" five or six (quoted in Judah, "Jews' Tribute," 171).
104. Personal communication, 2 February 1999. Individual examples can be found here and there: Moses Jessurun Cardoso, a Port Royal merchant naturalized in June 1675, had until around 1710 "an estate in Vere with an indigo works, negroes, etc.,... which he said was worth £1,500." In partnership with another Sephardic Jew, Cardoso held a patent for one hundred acres in St. Andrew parish (?) dated 20 September 1672 (Andrade, *Jews in Jamaica*, 129-30). William Dickson printed the following advertisement, in the *Gazette of St. Jago de la Vega*, for 8 November 1787:

To be sold a plantation and sugar work called Dover Castle, situated, &c. It consists of 1100 acres of land - well timbered with all kinds of hard wood, mahogany in great plenty, abounds with ground provisions, plenty of Guinea grass, a very fine set of works lately compleated, 100 negroes well disposed and accustomed to the property, for a number of years. *They are strangers to running away, &c.* DAVID HENRIQUES.

(William Dickson, *Letters on Slavery, to Which Are Added, Addresses to the Whites, and to the Free Negroes of Barbadoes; and Accounts of Some Negroes Eminent for Their Virtues and Abilities* [London: J. Phillips, 1789], 124.)

105. Faber, *Slavery and the Jews*, 71-82; Fortune, *Merchants and Jews*, 161-63.
106. Isaac S. and Suzanne A. Emmanuel, *History of the Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 2 vols. (Cincinnati, OH: American Jewish Archives, 1970), 1:75.
107. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:75.
108. Böhm, *Sefardies*, 183.
109. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:228.
110. Seymour B. Liebman, *New World Jewry, 1493-1825: Requiem for the Forgotten* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1982), 184.
111. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:142. See also Böhm, *Sefardies*, 189-92.
112. On the activities of this merchant, scion of one of the most distinguished Amsterdam Sephardic families, see Böhm, *Sefardies*, 190.
113. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:78. Two official documents recording Sephardi purchases of slaves in 1715 and 1719 were excerpted and translated in Zvi Loker, ed., *Jews in the Caribbean: Evidence on the History of the Jews in the Caribbean Zone in Colonial Times* (Jerusalem: Misgav Yerushalayim, 1991), 128-29 (doc. 26).
114. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:78. Prominent among the Jewish purchasers were the cantors David Pardo in 1701 and David Lopez Fonseca in 1705, and the physician Isaacq da Costa in 1705.

115. For a biography of one such late-eighteenth-century planter, see R. Bijlsma, "David de Is. C. Nassy: Author of the *Essai Historique sur Surinam*," in *The Jewish Nation in Surinam: Historical Essays*, edited by R. Cohen (Amsterdam: S. Emmering, 1982).
116. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 148.
117. AJA microfilm reel 67h, fols. 211-14 = Records of Jurators of Surinam; Portuguese Jewish Communion [sic; 1730s-54]/Archief der Nederlandsch-Portugeesch-Israelietische Gemeente in Suriname, Nos. 25-26. The seemingly exorbitant acreage was not uncommon among colonial land grants, but perhaps the bestowal was never executed or, if so, ultimately concerned a smaller amount of land.
118. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 129.
119. AJA microfilm reel 67f, fol. 43 = Records of Jurators of Surinam; Portuguese Jewish Communion [sic; 1740s-70s] / Archief der Nederlandsch-Portugeesch-Israelietische Gemeente in Suriname, Nos. 7-8.
120. G. W. Meiden, *Betwist Bestuur: Een Eeuw Strijd Om de Macht in Surinam, 1651-1753* (Amsterdam: De Bataafsche Leeuw, 1987), 54. According to a 1688 letter to the directors of the Surinam Society, 21 Jews who owned sugar mills owed the West India Company 2,689.418 Dutch pounds of sugar for the cost of slaves, while 64 Jews who did not own sugar mills owed 3,448.522 Dutch pounds of sugar (ibid.).
121. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 44.
122. Meiden, *Betwist Bestuur*, 75; Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 213.
123. See, for instance, Meiden's similar evaluation of this text: "The role of the Jews was continually defended and also depicted as being better than it was" (Meiden, *Betwist Bestuur*, 67).
124. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 96.
125. Wim Hoogbergen, "The History of the Suriname Maroons," in *Resistance and Rebellion in Suriname: Old and New*, edited by Gary Brana-Shute, College of William and Mary, Studies in Third World Societies, no. 43 (Williamsburg, VA: Dept. of Anthropology, College of William and Mary, 1990), 95, n. 7.
126. Van Lier, *Frontier Society*, 161-62; Richard Price, *The Guiana Maroons: A Historical and Bibliographical Introduction* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976), 16.
127. Richard Price, *Guiana Maroons*, 16.
128. For examples from 1707, see Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 159. Though somewhat exaggerated, Bloom called the local slave trade "one of the most important Jewish activities here as elsewhere in the colonies."
129. Stedman, *Narrative*, 1:335. The time must have been the 1760s or early 1770s when Stedman made his notes. The *Historical Essay* made such posts seem extremely rare (Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 101).
130. Marcus and Chyet, *ibid.*, 99.
131. The twelfth-century Rambam preferred the use of Jewish poor. In his *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Gifts to the Poor, 10:17, he wrote:

The sages commanded that the household employ of a Jew should be [Jewish] poor people and orphans in the place of slaves. Better for him to use these [poor and orphaned Jews] and thus descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob will derive pleasure from his wealth, while the seed of Ham will not enjoy it. For everyone who multiplies [the number of his] slaves day in and day out adds sin and iniquity to the world, while if the poor should make up his household employ every hour he adds merits and mitzvot.

Rambam cited no source for his sages. Note also his assumption that slaves are descendants of Ham. The eleventh-century Ashkenazic R. Meshullam advised Jews to do without slaves completely, but instead to train "members of the household to do the necessary domestic service themselves" (*Sh'elot u-Teshuvot* of R. Meshullam, edited by J. Müller, 5 and 12, n.21; cited in Abrahams, *Jewish Life*, 97).

132. במלכות שלנו ראה ראינו כי אינם אצלנו אלא בשכירות בעלמא... וכפי מה שחקרתי ודרשתי... זה הענין שאינם מניחים ליהודים להיות אצלם עבדים ושפחות אלא בכל מיני אופי [שכירות לקצת שנים, וכמה חוגשים] ששרי מקנה. עולים בערכאות, ואף גם זאת לא שוה אליהם וכולי האי "ואולי... ושייך בהאי דינא דמלכותא... שבענין העבדים והשפחות אין לנו אלא דינא דמלכותא" (Yosef ibn Lev, *Sh'elot u-Teshuvot RYB* L, Pt. 1, no. 12; cited in Asaf, "Slaves," 21). (Shmuel ben Moshe de Medina, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvo*, vol. 1, pt. 2 [Yoreh De'ah], responsum no. 194, and responsum no. 195: "בזמן הזה לכ"ע אין עבד קנוי לישראל לנופו, לפי שחק המלכות הוא שאין שום אדם" [cited in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 21, n. 143]).
133. Lamdan, *Holding of Maidservants*, 360.
134. Ya'akov b. Asher, *Arba'ah Turim*, pt. 2 (Yoreh De'ah), sec. 267; cited in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 19, n. 124.
135. Ya'akov Castro, *Sefer Erekh Lekhem* (Constantinople, 1718), commentary to Yoreh De'ah, #267. R. Moses Matrani held similarly. Both cited in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 23.
136. See his responsum dated 1767 in *Sh'elot u-T'shuvo Pri Ets Hayyim*, 8 vols. (Amsterdam, 1701-92), 4/5:227a (responsum no. 474).
137. See Glis, *Tosefot*, variant 5, ad loc. Gen. 9:22 and 276, variant 6 (*moshav zekeinim*), ad loc. Gen. 9:25; see also 277, variant 9, ad loc. Gen. 9:25.
138. Ibn Kaspi, *Tirat Kesef*, 67-68.
139. Abravanel, *Perush al ha-Torah*, comm. to Exod. 21:18.
140. See Rashi, ad loc. Gen. 9:26 ("even when the children of Shem will be exiled (שיגלו) slaves will be sold to them from the children of Kena'an"); Yitshak b. Yosef Karo (b. ca. 1458), *Toldot Yitshak*, reprint of Constantinople, 1518 (Jerusalem: H. Wegsel, 1994), ad loc. Gen. 9:26 (quoting Rashi); Moshe [b. Ya'akov] A[b]belda (1500-before 1583; Greece, Albania), *Olat Tamid* (Venice, 1601), 56b, who made provision for Canaanite servitude under every circumstance; Eliezer Ashkenazi (1513-1586; Salonika, Egypt, Famagusta, Venice, Poznan, Cracow), *Ma'asei Adonai* (Cracow, 1584 [orig. Venice, 1583]), 57: "the curse is forever, that [Kena'an's] children will be slaves to the children of his brothers"; Ya'akov Lombroso, *Tanakh, with Commentary on Difficult Words by Ya'akov Lombroso* (Venice, 1639), ad loc. Gen. 9:25. Unless it is a typographical error, the biblical commentary of Yitshak b. Yosef Karo (b. ca. 1458) had the Canaanites available as slaves "even after the redemption (שיגאלי) of Israel" (Karo, Yitshak b. Yosef, *Toldot Yitshak*, ad loc. Gen. 9:25).
141. Rafael Yosef ben Hayyim Hazan, *Ma'arhei Lev*, Pt. 2 (Salonika: Bezalel ha-Levi, 1722), drush 116, parshat Emor.
142. See Mishna Sanhedrin 9:6, which Rambam cited.
143. Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Forbidden Relations (Isurei Bi'ah) 12:11.
144. Laws of Inheritance 4:6; cited in Yehoshua b. Yisrael Benvenisti, *Oznei Yehoshua* (Constantinople, 1677), 6b (parshat Lekh Lekha). Benvenisti paraphrased Rambam's

wording, which allowed for more nuanced distinctions between different slave personalities, but made it harder for a slave to qualify as an heir:

If he is learned in Torah or is a kosher person who is proven [to be knowledgeable] in the details of the commandments, then he shall inherit. . . . But if he is from the general laypeople, and needless to say if he was from those who make themselves derelict in this [Torah], then he is considered a slave in all matters and his brothers from his father sell him.

145. Ishac Athias, *THESORO DE PRECEPTOS ADONDE SE ENCIERRAN Las joyas de los Seys cientos y treze Preceptos, que encomendó el Señor a su Pueblo israel. CON SV DECLARACION, Razon, y Dinim, conforme a la verdadera Tradicion, recibida de Mosè y enseñada por nuestros sabios de gloriosa memoria* (Amsterdam: Samuel ben Israel Soeyro, 1649), 67a (positive commandment no. 235).
146. Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Slaves, 9:6. See also Ibn Ezra, who expressed the same opinion (Ibn Ezra, *Perushei Ibn Ezra*, comm. to Lev. 25:26).
147. See the facsimile edition, *Lisbon Bible, 1482, British Library Or. 2626*, with an introduction by Gabrielle Sed-Rajna (Tel Aviv: Nahar-Miskal/British Library, 1988).
148. Yosef ben David, *Sefer Beit David* (Salonika, 1740), responsum no. 127; cited in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 32.
149. Abraham Pharar, *DECLARACÃO DAS 613. ENCOMENDANCAS de nossa Sancta Ley, conforme à Exposição de nossos Sabios, muy neçessaria ao Iudismo. COM A TABOADA D'ELLAS, SEGINDO as Parasioth, e no fim estão annexas as destinações das penas, em que encorrem os transgressores, e outras curiosidades* (Amsterdam: Paulo de Ravenstein, 1627), 160 (positive commandment no. 235); Athias, *Thesoro de preceptos*, 66b (positive commandment no. 235); Selomoh de Oliveyra, *Darhei ha-Shem* (Amsterdam: David de Castro Tartas, 1683), s.v., "avadam."
150. Moshe b. Ya'akov Hagiz, *Sefer Eleh ha-Mitzvot* (Amsterdam, 1713), positive commandment no. 135.
151. Avraham ben Shmuel Meyuhas, *Sadeh ha-Arets* (Salonika, 1788), 11a (parshat Lekh Lekha). The latter part of Meyuhas's statement is based on Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Slaves, 8:15, and ultimately on views aired in B.T. Gittin 37b. Other authorities who agreed that Lev. 25:46 constituted a positive commandment: the unknown rabbi cited as already deceased, in Yitshak b. Moshe Nunes[-Belmonte], *Sha'ar ha-H. H.*, cited as already deceased, in Yitshak b. Moshe Nunes (Salonika, 1771), laws of slaves, ch. 3, *Melekh* (Jerusalem: Ha-Mesora, 1968 [orig. Salonika, 1777 ed. (New sec. 3; Rafael Elazar Nahmias, *Hon Rav*, photo reprint of Salonika, 1777 ed. (New York: Goldenberg Brothers, 1996), 8a (drush for parshat Lekh Lekha).
152. "Reuven was a wealthy man and bought maidservants to serve his wife and several years before his death he gave them as a gift to his son Hanoh in an arranged transaction, meeting all the [proper] conditions, so that they were bodily owned by the latter from thence and that the above-mentioned Reuven should not be permitted to sell them to another, that all the days of his [Hanoh's] life they would be in his possession, to serve his wife, as she has been used to until then. (Pri Ets Hayyim, 3:148 [responsum no. 293]). This responsum dates from 1752.
153. Moshe ben Nisim Benvenisti, *Pnei Moshe* (Constantinople, Vol. 1: Avraham Franco, 1669; Vol. 2: Avraham Franco, 1671; Vol. 3: Avraham Rozanes, 1719), 1:3 (responsum no. 35).
154. See, for example, the responsum of Bezalel Ashkenazi (sixteenth century; Egypt), in which an anonymous bachelor obtained for himself a young maidservant in exchange

- for expensive clothes that he got from his father (Bezalel Ashkenazi, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot* [Lvov, 1904], responsum no. 35).
155. Lamdan, *Holding of Maidservants*, 367, n. 89; Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, Pt. 1, responsum no. 318; see also Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot mi-K"Y*, responsum no. 160). A question put to R. Shlomo b. Yehiel Luria (sixteenth century; Lublin) shows that Jewish women in eastern Europe customarily hired (or insisted that their husbands hire) a servant following childbirth (Shlomo b. Yehiel Luria, *Sh'elot u-Teshuvot* [Lublin ?], 1599], responsum no. 45).
 156. *Die Statuten der Drei Gemeinden Altona, Hamburg und Wandsbek: Quellen Zur Jüdischen Gemeindeorganisation Im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert*, 2 vols., edited by Heinz Mosche Graupe, *Hamburger Beiträge Zur Geschichte der Deutschen Juden*, Band 3, Teil 1 (Hamburg: Hans Christian Verlag, 1973), 1:203 (German trans.), 2:153 (Hebrew).
 157. "... my soul is sick for your love, please God heal it, by showing it the pleasantness of your radiance, then it will be strengthened and healed, and it will be for you an eternal maidservant." At some point, the word "maidservant / עֲבֵדָה," was replaced by "happiness / שמחה" though so far I have been unable to determine the textual history of this substitution. Joseph Yahalom gave only "later generations" as the vague culprit (see Andrea Tietze and Joseph Yahalom, *Ottoman Melodies - Hebrew Hymns: A 16th Century Cross-Cultural Adventure*, Bibliotheca Orientalis Hungarica [Budapest: Akadémiai Kiado, 1995], 29). The historically minded Naftali Ben-Asher discussed the many errors to have accumulated in the printing of Yedid Nefesh, but failed to shed any light on the dating of the substitution in question (Naftali Ben-Asher, *Be-Sha'are Sefer* [Jerusalem: Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1967], 210-13). Others also failed to provide information on this history. See Shlomo Tal, *Ha-Sidur be-Hishtalsheluto: T'shuvot le-Sh'elot be-Ikvot Sidur Rinat Yisrael* (Jerusalem: N. Tal, 1985), 66-67. In typical fashion, Yahalom attributed such positive pietistic symbolic use of slaves and the master-slave relationship to "contemporary Turkish society," as if earlier rabbinic literature were not replete with similar imagery (Tietze and Yahalom, *Ottoman Melodies*, 28).
 158. Efra'im Shlomo b. Aharon of Leczyca [Luntshits], *Olelot Efra'im*, orig. Lublin, 1590 (Jerusalem, 1989), 118, 157-59; Elliot R. Wolfson, "Walking as a Sacred Duty: Theological Transformation of Social Reality in Early Hasidism," in *Hasidism Reappraised*, edited by Ada Rapoport-Albert (London: Littman Library of Jewish Civilization, 1997), 189, n. 32. The literature of (ex-)Conversos showed the same affinity for rhetorical slaves; see the extended "midrash" on the Jews' obligation to maintain divine Law in Abraham Pereyra, *Espejo de la Vanidad del Mundo* (Amsterdam: Alexandro Ianse, 5431), 79-80.
 159. In many of the responsa about slaves and servants, the owner was referred to as גביר, which might be translated as "lord," "master," and its feminine equivalent, גבירה, an indication of the perceived social standing of the masters. But not only elites owned slaves or employed servants. The labor-intensive nature of household life meant that many "middling" families made use of outside help. One responsum involved a woman who was forced to sell her maidservant in order to be able to afford her own food (Aharon b. Yosef Sason, *Sefer Torat Emet*, photo reprint of Venice, 1626 ed. [Jerusalem: N.p., 1985], responsum no. 23).
 160. Yeshayahu Hurvits, *Sefer Shnei Luhot ha-Brit ha-Shalem*, orig. Amsterdam, 1649, 2 vols. (Haifa: Yad Ramah, 1992), 2:73. Hurvits possibly derived his statement

- from the nearly identical sentiments expressed in Moshe ibn Yehuda Machir (Safed; sixteenth/seventeenth century), *Sefer Seder ha-Yom*, repr. of Venice, 1599 (Jerusalem: Even Yisrael, 1996), 75.
161. Contract between Kehila Kedosha Shearith Israel and Gershom Seixas in regard to School, The Lyons Collection, P-15, Box 1-147, AJHS, 2.
 162. See, for instance, Francis P. Karner, *The Sephardim of Curaçao: A Study of Socio-Cultural Patterns in Flux* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1969), 23.
 163. Mair Jose Benardete, *Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews* (New York: Hispanic Institute in the United States, 1953), 69.
 164. Translated in Marc Saperstein, *Jewish Preaching, 1200-1800: An Anthology* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1989), 278-79; the original is in Sha'ul ha-Levi Morteira, *Giv'at Sha'ul* (Warsaw, 1902), 109-14.
 165. Athias, *Thesoro de preceptos*, 67v. His view is based on earlier sources.
 166. Yehuda Aryeh (Leone) Modena, *Ziknei Yehudah* (Venice: Yitshak ben Ya'akov min ha-Levi'im, 1650), responsum no. 34; reprinted in Shlomo Simohnssohn, "Leon da Modena: A Monograph Based on Hitherto Unpublished Manuscripts" (Thesis, University of London, 1952), 92 (responsum no. 34). Modena was discussing a servant who was not only Jewish but of priestly descent.
 167. Minutes and notes of meetings of Senhores do Mahamad, entry of Tuesday, 11 July 1777, microfilm reel 527, fol. 387, AJA.
 168. Richard J. H. Gottheil, "Fray Joseph Diaz Pimienta, Alias Abraham Diaz Pimienta," *PAJHS* 9 (1901): 22-23. I cannot vouch for the accuracy of this report, not having been able to inspect the actual Inquisition documents. It is true, however, that dozens of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century New Christians fled Iberian territories for Curaçao, where they were circumcised and returned to Judaism (see Emmanuel, *Jews in the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:118).

Chapter 3

1. Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants and Rebels*, 161-62.
2. This was the case as well in both Christian and Muslim cultures, where elites and leaders employed men in ways "far more visible than females," in "conspicuous, public positions like footman and butler," and bedecked in extravagant clothes. Daniel Roche called this the "aristocratic" model of domestic service (cited in Marybeth Carlson, "A Trojan Horse of Worldliness? Maidservants in the Burgher Households of Rotterdam at the End of the Seventeenth Century," in *Women in the Golden Age: An International Debate on Women in Seventeenth-Century Holland, England, and Italy*, edited by Els Kloek, Nicole Teeuwen, and Marijke Huisman [Hilversum: Verloren, 1994], 88). Men in positions of prestige in the Ottoman elite "required *hujjāb* or doormen to screen visitors and petitioners, stable hands (*ghilmān*) to care for riding mounts, and trained entertainers for social functions held at their homes" (Shaun E. Marmon, "Domestic Slavery in the Mamluk Empire: A Preliminary Sketch," in *Slavery in the Islamic Middle East*, edited by Shaun E. Marmon [Princeton, NJ: Markus Wiener, 1999], 9). Men, in other words, symbolized status, strength, and control, but also luxury, as they often performed little productive work.

3. Hunwick, "Black Slaves in the Mediterranean," 20; see also Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 132-39.
4. Hieronymus Monetrus, or Münzer, who visited Portugal in the 1490s, described the enormous ironworks in which numerous Blacks operated the furnaces producing anchors and firearms (Jerónimo Münzer, *Viaje por España y Portugal, 1494-1495*, translated by José López Toro [Madrid: Colección Almenara, 1951], 73-74; Brásio, *Pretos*, 10).
5. Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," and idem, "Slaves and Slave Trading Among Jews in the Middle Ages: Addenda" [Hebrew], *Zion* 5 (1940): 271-80. Asaf's pathbreaking and thorough study focused on responsa sources and made no effort to integrate data from "social" sources. Additionally, his study trailed off into silence on the period in which Jewish slavery in the Americas manifested itself. In the course of my research, I checked many responsa collections not cited by Asaf. See also the equally pathbreaking essay, Howard Adelman, "Servants and Sexuality: Seduction, Surrogacy, and Rape: Some Observations Concerning Class, Gender, and Race in Early Modern Italian Jewish Families," in *Gender and Judaism: The Transformation of Tradition*, edited by T. M. Rudavsky (New York: New York University Press, 1995).
6. This is despite the fairly frequent discursive highlighting of their Blackness through phrases such as שפחה כושית (Kushite maidservant) or negro/negra and mulato/mulata. One cannot, except with rare exception, discover whether someone listed in a document without racial denotation was actually Black. Intriguingly, no Blacks appeared as such in various responsa from Amsterdam, even in situations where one would expect to find mostly Black slaves, such as in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.
7. Blumenthal, "Implements of Labor," throughout.
8. Hecht, *Continental and Colonial Servants*, 40-41, 47-48.
9. For eighteenth-century England and France, see Hecht, *Continental and Colonial Servants*, 36, 41-42; Cissie Fairchild, *Domestic Enemies: Servants and Their Masters in Old Regime France* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1984), 158-59, 272, n. 94. Aravamudan's reading of the petlike doting Black domestics received in England captures the power of difference in generating intergroup relations: "Perhaps colonial servants were treated with indulgence because they were still exotic and did not threaten the class structure in the manner European servants might have done" (Srinivas Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans: Colonialism and Agency, 1688-1804* [Chapel Hill, NC: Duke University Press, 1999], 339, n. 13).
10. Even the transcription of testimony was frequently corrupted by scribes. The prominent R. David ibn Zimra (1479-1573; Egypt) noted how he had "seen scribes who, being wise in their own eyes, would either add, subtract or interpret of their own accord. I have seen it many times in instances where women testified and where they gave their testimony in the vernacular [Spanish] or in Arabic, and often the translation of that testimony changed the complexion of the whole case" (cited in Joel L. Kraemer, "Spanish Ladies from the Cairo Geniza," in *Jews, Christians, and Muslims in the Mediterranean World After 1492*, edited by Alisa Meyuhass Ginio [London: Frank Cass, 1992], 244, n. 25).
11. Jacob Barnai, "The Jews of the Ottoman Empire in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," in *Moresheet Sepharad: The Sephardi Heritage*, edited by Haim Beinart (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Hebrew University, 1992), 2:147.
12. Meir ben Shem Tov Melamed, *Mishpat Tsedek* (Salonika, 1615), vol. 1, responsum no. 52. Melamed studied with R. Yosef ben Yitshak ibn Ezra (ca. 1560-1620), himself a

- student of R. Shmuel de Medina. The hard-line position of Melamed, shared by other Sephardic rabbis in the eastern Mediterranean area, drew on an opinion expressed anonymously by the Mishna to the effect that all contracts executed in non-Jewish courts were kosher, despite the non-Jewish witnesses, *except* for writs of divorce and manumissions of slaves (Mishna Gittin 1:5).
13. Avraham ben Eliezer ha-Levi, *Ein Mishpat* (Salonika, 1897), responsum no. 45; quoted in H. J. Zimmels, *Die Marranen in der Rabbinischen Literatur: Forschungen und Quellen Zur Geschichte und Kulturgeschichte der Amussim* (Berlin: Buchhandlung Rubin Mass, 1932), 37.
14. On the ambiguous significance of slaves and surnames, see Blumenthal, "Implements of Labor," 174-77.
15. My reconstruction of the documents is based on descriptions given to me in personal communication by Nadia Zeldes, who cited them in Nadia Zeldes, "The Converted Jews of Sicily Before and After the Expulsion (1460-1550)" [Hebrew] (Ph.D. diss., Tel Aviv University, 1997), 40: "In March 1474 the Inquisitor Salvo Caxetta (or Casetta) ordered the arrest of a black slave named Xalonio from Castrogiovanni, the slave of a Jew from Agrigento, who was converted and circumcised by Jews from Marsala. Ultimately, the viceregent intervened in the slave's case and ordered his liberation." Actual copies of the documents from the Sicilian archives (ASP R. Cancelleria reg. 130 c 216v; ASP R. Protonotaro reg. 73 c 11v, 17 March 1474) belong to the Italia Judaica project of Tel Aviv University, which was not willing to make them available.
16. Zeldes, "Converted Jews of Sicily," 90, n. 66: "Marzuca mulier Judea relicta quondam Salomonis Bulfarachi civis panormis . . . considerans et attendens innatum anorem virginem intra eam et Jacobam eius filiam olim Judea et modo Xprianam, uxori magistri Bernardi di Splughis . . . eidem Jacobe filie sue donavit dedit . . . servam unam nigram gentem montis barce infidelem" (ASP Notario Giacomo Randisi reg. 1152 c 29 v). This gentem montis barce infidelem" (ASP Notario Giacomo Randisi reg. 1152 c 29 v). This slave's origin could lie in one of several places. Barqa was a town on the Mediterranean coast of present-day Libya. More probably referring to the place in question here, the fifteenth-century seaman Cadamosto described mountains of Barka as lying south of "Barbary," a few days inland from the West African coast at the Gulf of Arguim (Cada Mosto, "Original Journals," 2:212).
17. Again, my descriptions here, not quoted in Zeldes, "Converted Jews of Sicily," are based on personal communication with Nadia Zeldes.
18. Eliahu Ashtor, *The Jews and the Mediterranean Economy, 10th-15th Centuries* (London: Variorum Reprints, 1983), 236, 239, 445.
19. Zeldes, "Converted Jews of Sicily," 40. For an examination of fourteenth- and fifteenth-century decrees regarding Jewish slave owning on Sicily, see Charles Verlinden, "L'Esclavage en Sicile au Bas Moyen Âge," *Bulletin de l'Institut Historique Belge de Rome* 35 (1963): 101-7.
20. Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot mi-K"Y*, responsum no. 1157.
21. The Talmud calls the acquisition of slaves a pious work, through which more individuals can come to know the God of Israel (J.T. Avoda Zara 1, 1, 39b). The most recent of many studies on the topic is Natalie B. Dohrmann, "Slave Law as Cultural Narrative: Manumission and Transformation in Jewish and Roman Law," unpublished paper (Philadelphia, 2002), kindly provided to me by the author.
22. Printed in Avraham Gross, R. Yosef b. Avraham Hayyim: *Leader of the Lisbon Community and His Work* [Hebrew] (Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University Press, 1993), 268.

23. B.T. Baba Kama 88a.
24. Although adamant that circumcision removes the status of foreignness and thus enables the slave to live ritually like an Israelite (in this case), the passage from Exodus does not enforce circumcision in the same manner as Gen. 17:12-13. The Mekhilta de-Rabi Yishmael (end of fourth century or after) presented as the view of the rabbis this understanding that a Jew may possess uncircumcised slaves (Parshat Bo, 15). The Mishna made no mention of the need to circumcise male slaves. A passage in the Tosefta, statements of rabbis which did not make it into the redaction of the Mishna, seems to allow the possibility that the circumcision of non-Jewish slaves was not obligatory: "One who takes slaves from the [other] nations and circumcises them but does not ritually immerse them [for slavery], as also with the children of [one's] maidservants who have not been immersed, whether circumcised or not, these are *goyim* [non-Jews and] their unclean contact makes impure their wine" (Tosefta [Tsuckermandel version], Avoda Zara, 3:11).
25. B.T. Shabbat 137b and Yevamot 48a, respectively. The relatively late (fifth century or after) Mekhilta de-Rabi Shim'on Bar Yohai (12:44) held that a slave was to be circumcised against his will and based this view, as did the holder of the same opinion in the Talmud, on Exod. 12:44 (i.e., כל עבד, which can be read as "every slave"). By the medieval period, at least some of the *ba'alei tosefot* held that circumcision of slaves did not need to be performed if it went against the will of the slave; such was the understanding expressed in the toseftot commentary to B.T. Yevamot 48b (without mention of any rabbinic dispute over the issue).
26. B.T. Yevamot 48b. The parenthetical addition in my translation comes from Rashi's commentary to the talmudic discussion in Yevamot 48b and Eliahu Mizrahi, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot* (Adrianapoli: Brothers Bnei Yitshak Ya'abez, 1556), responsum no. 56.
27. This harmonization of the two opinions was attributed to the fourth-century R. Papa already in B.T. Yevamot 48b. Disputes about the nature of R. Papa's harmonization can be followed in the comments ad loc. of Rashi and Tosafot, as well as in R. Yosef Karo's *Kesef Mishneh* commentary to Rambam's *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Circumcision, 1:6.
28. R. Nahshon bar Zadok, Gaon of Sura from 871 to 879. See Nissim ben Hayyim Modai, ed., *Sha'arei Tsedek: T'shuvot ha-Geonim* (Jerusalem: Klal u-Prat, 1966 [orig., Salonika, 1792]), Pt. 3, ch. 6, responsum no. 27. The short responsum is translated in David M. Cobin, "Jews and the Medieval Slave Trade: The Law and Its Historical Context," in *Jewish Law Association Studies IX*, The London 1996 Conference Volume, edited by E. A. Goldman (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1997), 22. See also *Otsar ha-Geonim*, Yevamot 276-7.
29. Translated in Abrahams, *Jewish Life*, 100.
30. Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Circumcision, 1:1.
31. Ibid., 1:3.
32. Ibid., 1:2.
33. Ibid., 1:6. The only circumstance permitting retention of an uncircumcised slave was when the non-Jewish master selling him or the slave himself stipulated from the outset that the slave was not to be circumcised (ibid. and 8:12). Rambam based himself on the discussion in B.T. Yevamot 48b.
34. Ya'akov b. Asher, *Arba'ah Turim*, Book II (Yoreh De'ah), Laws of Slaves, sec. 267. The late-thirteenth-century *Sefer ha-Hinuch*, a widely popular compendium of commandments probably written by R. Aharon ha-Levi of Barcelona, also stated

- the need to circumcise houseborn and purchased Canaanite slaves (*mitzva* no. 2, parshat Noah).
35. Yosef Karo, *Shulkhan Arukh*, Book II (Yoreh De'ah), Laws of Slaves, sec. 267:1. Other prominent Sephardic rabbis agreed. R. David ibn Zimra reiterated the commandment for a master to circumcise male slaves (Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot mi-K'Y*, responsum no. 1).
36. Grayzel, *Church and the Jews*, 24, n. 14.
37. Yitzhak Baer, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:376. The list of *mitzvot* prefacing the Lisbon Bible of 1482 failed to include the circumcision of slaves, evidence too slim to prove or disprove observance of the practice in Portugal (Lisbon Bible).
38. Abrahams, *Jewish Life*, 99.
39. For instance, Hayyim Benvenisti, *Ba'ei Hayyei*, photo reprint of Salonika, 1791 (Jerusalem, 1970), Pt. 1 (Yoreh De'ah), responsum no. 224, ca. 1670s (?): "If this law of a circumcision done not at the correct time [i.e., not on the eighth day] . . . also holds for the son of a maidservant born in a Jewish house." In responsum no. 225, Benvenisti was asked whether the master or rabbinical court circumcising a slave makes the blessing, "to bring him into the covenant of Abraham our father." R. Yehiel Basan's 1737 book of responsa contains a question regarding "a maidservant who became pregnant in the house of Re'uven and bore a son and they circumcised him and named him Yitshak" (Yehiel Basan, *Sh'elot u-Teshuvot* [Constantinople: Yona b. Ya'akov, 1737], 75a [responsa no. 109]).
40. The Tosefta (Avoda Zara 3:11) indicated that male slaves needed to be immersed as well as circumcised.
41. Ya'akov b. Asher, *Arba'ah Turim*, Book II (Yoreh De'ah), Laws of Slaves, sec. 267.
42. Karo, *Shulkhan Arukh*, Book II (Yoreh De'ah), Laws of Slaves, sec. 267:9.
43. Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Forbidden Relations (Isurei Bi'ah), 12:11. See also Mishna Sanhedrin 9:6, which Rambam cited.
44. Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 39, n. 124. The text he cited is the early-fourteenth-century legal code of R. Yeruham b. Meshulam, *Sefer Adam ve-Hava*.
45. Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, Pt. 4, responsum no. 1157.
46. Hayyim Moshe b. Shlomo Amarillo, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot D'var Moshe* (Salonika, 1742), pt. 1, no. 58.
47. On the varying importance and extent of slave baptisms, see Jacques Heers, *Esclavos y sirvientes en las sociedades mediterraneas durante la edad media*, Estudios Universitarios, 36 (Valencia: Edicions Alfons el Magnanim/Institució Valenciana D'Estudis i Investigació, 1989), 94-95; Blumenthal, "Implements of Labor," 141-67; Mark D. Meyerson, "Slavery and Solidarity: Mudejars and Foreign Muslim Captives in the Kingdom of Valencia," *Medieval Encounters* 2, no. 3 (1996): 286-343.
48. The history and development of this concept has been treated in the seminal study of Jacob Katz, *The "Shabbos Goy": A Study in Halakhic Flexibility* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1989).
49. Y. Idrebi (אדרבי), *Sh'elot u-Teshuvot Divrei Rivot*, responsum no. 312: Reuven who had a Samaritan maidservant, and when he was away once in one of the villages his wife came and without his knowledge converted her, and even afterwards she remained in her master's house for many years, a servant in the house of her master as well as in the house of his daughters . . . as a pure maidservant [i.e., without any doubts about her slave status].

(Cited in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 31.)

50. Yehuda Ayas, *Beit Yehuda* (Livorno: Avraham ben Rephael Meldola, 1748), pt. 1 (Orakh Hayyim), responsum no. 13.
51. A maidservant who squeezed grapes to make a bath called Erosi and after she had squeezed the grapes she put her hand into the wine to remove the stems from it and afterwards mixed up this wine with another and without a mark [for identification], what is the ruling about this wine, is it forbidden or permitted [since a non-Jew touched it]?
(Yitshak Yosef ha-Cohen, *Ohel Yitshak* [Salonika: Mordehai Nahman and David Yisraeliya, 1801], 14b [Pt. 2, responsum no. 11].) Of course, in all of these cases, the individuals in question may have been employees and not slaves.
52. E. Leigh Gibson, "The Jewish Manumission Inscriptions of the Bosphoran Kingdom" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1997), i-ii.
53. A. Büchler, "Familienreinheit und Sittlichkeit in Sepphoris Im Zweiten Jahrhundert," *Monatschrift Für Geschichte und Wissenschaft Des Judentums* 28: 126-64.
54. Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 39, 19. A nearly identical disjunction manifested itself in early and medieval Islam (Hunwick, "Black Slaves in the Mediterranean," 21, 35, n. 74).
55. Medina, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot*, vol. 1, pt. 2 (Yoreh De'ah), responsum no. 194; Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 21.
56. One French bishop pointed to St. Paul (Ephesians 6:5-8) as inspiration for the attitude that slaves should remain in their state and that masters bore no absolute obligation to manumit them (Jacques Bénigne Bossuet [1627-1704], *Politique tirée des propres paroles de l'Ecriture Santé* [Paris, 1709]; cited in José María Rodríguez Martín and Juan Pedro López Adán, *Aproximación a la esclavitud en Toledo en la segunda mitad del siglo XVII* [Toledo: Caja Castilla La Mancha, 1991], 37), an attitude expressed as well by the Church in early-nineteenth-century Sicily, Spain, and Portugal, which considered the emancipation of slaves "a pious work; it was neither obligatory nor even expressly recommended" (Verlinden, *Beginnings of Modern Colonization*, 27).
57. Ruth Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders: Sevillian Society in the Sixteenth Century* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1972), 182.
58. Shlomo b. Yosef Amarillo (1695-1748; Salonika), *Kerem Shlomo* (Salonika, 1719), responsum no. 16.
59. *Pri Ets Hayyim*, 4/5:227a (responsum no. 474).
60. Meldola ruled that the maidservant in fact reverted to Reuven's possession, to do with as he wished, including to provide her with her freedom if he chose.
61. Several deeds of manumission dating from the talmudic period to the sixteenth century, some of them purely formulaic sample texts, are brought in Asher Gulak, *Otsar ha-Sh'etarot ha-Nehugim bi-Yisrael*, Sifri'a Mishpatit (Jerusalem: D'fus ha-Po'alim, 1926), 355-59. Others can be found in various collections: a deed of manumission from Silestria (1609), in Efra'im Dinard, *Or Me'ir* (New York, 1896), 57; a barely readable facsimile of a get from Constantinople, 15 Sivan 1738, in Shlomo Rosanes, *Korat ha-Yehudim be-Turkia ve-Arsot ha-Kedem* (Pt. I: Tel Aviv, Dvir; Pts. II-V: Sofia, 1930-38), pt. 5, supplementary matter, fig. 7; the laws of a deed of manumission are treated in Amarillo, *Sh'elot*, pt. 1, no. 58, and the text of a deed appears in Amarillo, *Sh'elot*, pt. 1, no. 59; text of a get from Jerusalem, 1872, with a long discussion, in Binyamin Mordehai Navon, *B'nei Binyamin* (Jerusalem: Yoel Moshe b. Salaman, 1881), 6a-8a (pt. 1, sec. 4).

62. Salama, "Slaves," 71.
63. Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean and the Mediterranean World in the Age of Philip II* (New York: Harper and Row), 2:754-55. He cited Cristóbal de Villalón, *Viaje de Turquía* (Madrid: Colección Universal, 1919 [orig. 1555]). For a comparison between Jewish and non-Jewish manumission practices and their surrounding context, the former described here, see, among other studies, Alfonso Franco Silva, *La Esclavitud en Andalucía, 1450-1550* (Granada: Universidad de Granada, 1992), 122-35; Blumenthal, "Implements of Labor," ch. 6 ("Paths to Freedom"); Saunders, *Black Slaves and Freedmen*, 91-92, 138-142, 147; Rodríguez Martín and López Adán, *Esclavitud en Toledo*, 82-90; Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 86-93, 120-21, 169-72.
64. "Reuven...willed at the hour of his death that his maidservant stay with his wife, sustaining her as long as she should live and after her death will she go free" (Hasdai b. Shmuel ha-Cohen Perahya [1605?-1678], *Sefer Torat Heseid* [Salonika, 1733], responsum no. 45).
65. Edgar Roy Samuel, "Manuel Levy Duarte (1631-1714): An Amsterdam Merchant Jeweller and His Trade with London," *TJHSE* 27 (1978/80): 21.
66. An eighteenth-century deed of manumission from Bosnia was sent to the rabbis of Salonika for approval. They found that it was not written "as is customary these days here" (Amarillo, *Sh'elot*, pt. 1, no. 59). See also Mordehai b. Yehuda ha-Levi (seventeenth century; Egypt), *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot Darhei No'am* (Venice, 1697), Yoreh De'ah, responsum no. 9; Yosef David, *Sefer Beit David*, responsum no. 123, cited also in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 32, n. 216; also ha-Cohen Perahya, *Sefer Torat Heseid*, responsum no. 44.
67. Adelman, "Servants and Sexuality," 92-93. Adelman's source is Matanot Beadam, Ms. JTSA 7084, responsum no. 142; identical to Ma'arivei nachal, MS JTSA 7085, responsum no. 132. This responsum does not appear, however, in Yacov Boksenboim, ed., *Responsa Mattanot be-Adam*, American Academy for Jewish Research, Texts and ed., Publications of the Diaspora Research Institute (Tel Aviv: Tel Aviv University Press, 1983).
68. Though Avraham b. David Yitshaki (1661-1729; Jerusalem) did handle a query into whether the ban on sex with maidservants derived from the Torah or later rabbinic law (Avraham b. David Yitshaki, *Sefer Zera Avraham* [Vol. 1: Izmir: Yona Ashkenazi and David Hazan; Vol. 2: Constantinople: Yona b. Ya'akov, 1732-33], Pt. 2 [Yoreh De'ah], responsum no. 27).
69. Unlike under Islamic law and practice. According to one medieval Hanafi commentator, the purpose of a female slave was sexual service and childbearing (al-'Ayni, *Sharh al-kanz* [Cairo, 1312], 2:13-14; cited in Marmon, "Domestic Slavery," 4). Wrote Marmon: "The primacy of this role is made quite clear by the fact that the statement 'your sexual organ is free,' *farjuki hurran*, serves as a formula of manumission for female slaves" (al-'Ayni, 1:189). In ancient Greece and Rome, as well, masters believed they had the right to their female domestics' sexuality, a belief given legal support to a certain degree. Masters frequently took on female slaves as concubines (with the bastard children acknowledged and raised in the household); slaves could not charge their masters with rape, although owners might sue anyone who raped or seduced their slaves (Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity* [New York: Schocken Books, 1975], 90-91).

70. Azulai, *Diaries of Rabbi Azulai*, 217-18.
71. Hayyim Hrishenti, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot Torat Hayyim le-MaHaRKhaSh* (Salonika, pt. 1: 1713, pt. 2: 1715, pt. 3: 1722), pt. 2, responsum no. 13; cited by Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 25, n. 160. Another responsum, by David b. Nahmias (early sixteenth century; Turkey), about a man who bought a maidservant for the purpose of sex comes from the same collection (Hrishenti, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot Torat Hayyim*, pt. 3, responsum no. 45; cited in Ruth Lamdan, "The Holding of Maidservants in the Jewish Community in Israel, Syria and Egypt in the Sixteenth Century" [Hebrew], in *Days of the Moon: Chapters in the History of the Jews in the Ottoman Empire*, edited by Mina Rosen [Tel Aviv: University of Tel Aviv Press, 1996], 356, and Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 26.
72. Shlomo b. Avraham ha-Cohen, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot MaHaRSHaKH* (Salonika, 1594), addenda to Pt. 2, responsum no. 4.
73. Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, Pt. 1, responsum no. 48; cited in Strauss, *Jews in Egypt and Syria*, 2:526, n. 6, and Lamdan, "Holding of Maidservants," 365. See also Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, Pt. 3, responsa nos. 955-56, Pt. 4, no. 1296 (= Pt. 7, no. 33).
74. Lamdan, "Holding of Maidservants," 367, n. 89. On the proliferation of forbidden personal relations between maidservants and their masters in Egypt, see Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, Pt. 1, responsum no. 196.
75. Yosef ben Yitzhak Sambari, *Sefer Divrei Yosef: Eleven Hundred Years of Jewish History Under Muslim Rule*, The full text edited on the basis of manuscripts and early printed editions and annotated by, edited by Shimon Shtober (Jerusalem: Yad Izhak Ben-Zvi/Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1994), 381-82.
76. It is not always clear what, if any, professional relationship existed between the Sephardic merchant and the Dutch woman involved. Miriam Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation: Conversos and Community in Early Modern Amsterdam* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997), 182, n. 57, listed the deeds transcribed and translated in Koen, et al, "Notarial Records," SR 2:124, no. 78; SR 3:114, no. 124; SR 3:248, no. 197 (see also SR 6:242-43, nos. 660 and 661, and SR 7:120, nos. 693 and 696); SR 4:255, no. 315; SR 7:268, no. 743; SR 8:301, no. 844 (and see SR 8:304, nos. 855, 860, and 861, also SR 10:97, no. 883); SR 10:213-14, no. 948; SR 11:91, no. 1157; SR 13:227, no. 1522; SR 13:234 n. 45; SR 15:146, no. 1779 (charge of rape); SR 24:76, no. 2896. Earlier notarial data does not exist; later sources exist only in manuscript in the GAA in Amsterdam, have not yet been transcribed, and were not directly consulted.
77. Probably because anyone under the age of twenty five - the majority of the maidservants in Jewish homes - was ineligible to act as a witness (Rudolph Dekker, "Maid Servants in the Dutch Republic: Sources and Comparative Perspectives," in *Women in the Golden Age: An International Debate on Women in Seventeenth-Century Holland, England, and Italy*, edited by Els Klock, Nicole Teeuwen, and Marijke Huiseman [Hilversum: Verloren, 1994], 97).
78. Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, Pt. 1, responsum no. 196. The Muslim Mustafa 'Ali's description of Cairo in 1599 conveyed his similar "feelings of repugnance at the widespread miscegenation between local males and black women" (Ronald Jennings, "Black Slaves and Free Slaves in Ottoman Cyprus, 1590-1640," *Journal of Economic and Social History of the Orient* 30, no. 3 [1987]: 288, n. 2).
79. For excellent summaries, see Fairchilds, *Domestic Enemies*, 164-92 (ch. 6: "Sexual Relationships between Master and Servant"); Bridget Hill, *Servants: English Domestic in*

- the Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 44-63 (ch. 3: "The Sexual Vulnerability and Sexuality of Female Domestic Servants").
80. See, for instance, the discussion in Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 129-32.
81. Harriet Lane Levy, *920 O'Farrell Street: A Jewish Girlhood in Old San Francisco* (Berkeley: Heyday Books, 1996 [orig. 1937]), 136.
82. Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, Pt. 3, responsum no. 894 (= Pt. 7, no. 6); cited in Lamdan, "Holding of Maidservants," 364.
83. Ha-Cohen Perahya, *Sefer Torat Hesed*, responsum no. 45.
84. Yom Tov b. Yisrael Ya'akov Alghazi (1727-1802), *Simhat Yom Tov* (Salonika, 1794), responsum no. 1. Alghazi mentioned that another Jew had sold or given his *hamets*, leavened matter, to his own non-Jewish serving woman. The same issue arose in Eliahu b. Moshe Yisrael, *Sefer Kol Eliahu* (Livorno: Eliezer Sadon, 1792 [Vol. 1], 1807 [Vol. 2]), Vol. 1, Pt. 1, responsum no. 23.
85. GAA 334, no. 20, f. 200v; cited in Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 62. Bodian interpreted this to mean that the public celebration became a weapon in anti-Jewish polemics. A similar prohibition was announced in 1738 because of the declaration of a national day of prayer on 5 March ("Livro de pregoens," Afkondigingen in de synagoge gedaan, 1705-68, Parnassim van de Gemeente Talmud Tora, GAA 334, no. 112, fol. 92 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1611.). Members were told to warn "their sons and domestics not to commit disorders on this day, nor to go through the streets in a mask, due to the entrance of Purim."
86. Moshe b. Ya'akov Madjar, *B'nei Moshe* (Livorno: Eliezer Yosef Hayyim Sadon, 1804), 85b-90a.
87. For instance:

Reuven has a maidservant and she has given birth several times and a rumor went out in the city that she became pregnant through him and there are [witnesses?] to prove that this is so and now the time has come to speak of her betrothal. The asker asked if she needs to wait 3 months, according to the law of a concubine who wishes to marry.

(Benvenisti, *Pnei Moshe*, 3 [responsum no. 41].) The responsum is dated Shevat, 1670, and addressed "to Livorno, to a famous rabbi of Salonika."
88. *Pri Ets Hayyim*, 1:274a (responsum no. 100).
89. *Ibid.*, 3:157a [responsum no. 297].
90. *Ibid.*, 3:195a (responsum no. 313):

Reuven had a party for his son and he told Shimon the butcher to slaughter him many chickens. And this he did, checking the knife between each bird, according to law, but with the last three small chickens he didn't inspect between each one but only after all three and found a flaw. And he told Reuven that [the kashrut of] these three birds is in doubt and he made a sign on them. And thus Reuven told his maidservant not to cook these chickens with the others, as they might not be kosher. And the maidservant, due to working so hard, forgot what her master had said to her and cut up all the chickens, including the three, into thin slices, and made a dish [from it] and prepared all the needs of the feast. And at the moment when they came to eat the above-mentioned host remembered it.

See also the case from 1764 (*Pri Ets Hayyim*, 4/5:62a [responsum no. 382]).
91. Avraham b. Moshe de Boton, *Lehem Rav* (Izmir: Avraham b. Yedidya Gabai, 1660), responsum no. 44; Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 24, cited this as responsum no. 45.

118. Whereas *halakha* required the master's participation at and surrounding the immersion (Ha-Cohen Perahya, *Mateh Aharon*, pt. 1, responsum no. 32).
119. Ha-Cohen Perahya, *Sefer Torat Hesed*, responsum no. 49. The next responsum seems to continue treating this same case.
120. Medina, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot*, Vol. 1, Pt. 2 (Yoreh De'ah), responsum no. 194; cited in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 21.
121. B.T. Yevamot 62a. The statement is in the name of Rav.
122. Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Inheritance, 4:5.
123. Mosè Altaras, *Libro de mantenimiento de la alma* (Venice, 1609), 173. One provision found in the laws of Genoa, composed around 1400, prohibited bankers, goldsmiths, and all others from buying silver, pearls, precious stones, or gold from "any male or female slave or servant, or any boy or girl younger than fifteen," while another statute banned cloth merchants from buying clothing or other things from "any slave, garbageman, servant, or person of bad or dishonest reputation" (Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 97-98).
124. Jacob Katz, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance: Studies in Jewish-Gentile Relations in Medieval and Modern Times* (West Orange, NJ: Behrman House, 1961), 41.
125. My emphasis; Leone de' Sommi, *A Comedy of Betrothal* (*Tsahoth b'Dihutha d'Kiddushin*), translated by Alfred S. Golding (Ottawa: Dovehouse Editions, 1988), 117 (Act 4, Scene 7). For the original Hebrew, see Yehuda Sommo, *The First Hebrew Play: The Comedy of Betrothal by Yehuda Sommo (1527-1592) (Leone Sommo de Portaleone)*, Edited from Three Ms. [Hebrew], 2d ed., edited by J. Schirmann (Tel Aviv: Tarshish/Dvir, 1965), 76.
126. See Manuel Tejado Fernandez, *Aspectos de la vida social en Cartagena de indias durante el seiscientos* (Sevilla: Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos de Sevilla, 1954), 161-65.
127. Ibid., 163. Itic Croitoru Rotbaum, *De sefarad al neosefardismo: contribución a la historia de Colombia* (Bogotá: Editorial Kelly, 1967), 251, produced a transcription of this testimony that differs but slightly, and then mostly in terms of orthography.
128. Brian Pullan, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550-1670* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), 75, n. 13, 216.
129. Pullan, *ibid.*, 75, n. 13.
130. Carla Boccato, "Aspetti della condizione femminile nel ghetto di venezia (secolo XVII): i testamenti," *Italia* 10 (1993): 126-27. I thank Howard Adelman for bringing this item to my attention.
131. Peter Martin, *Schwarze Teufel, Edle Mohren: Afrikaner in Geschichte und Bewusstsein der Deutschen* (Hamburg: Hamburger Edition, 2001), 64. Martin cited other examples (pp. 65-66). According to Bertram Korn, Henriques served as factor for the Danish West Indies and Guinea Company beginning in 1686 (letter to Dr. R. Edelmann, Royal Library, Copenhagen, 9 June 1970, Bertram W. Korn Papers [1938-79], Series A., Research Materials, Slavery, 31/2, Correspondence 1970-75, Manuscript Collection No. 99, AJA). This company was established by Dutch merchants seeking to circumvent the monopoly of the Dutch WIC. Henriques's son Josua was also involved with the company (letter to P. C. Emmer, 23 October 1973, *ibid.*). It is possible that the ship Henriques referred to was one of his own; his son Isaac was master of the *Nordstar*, while other members of the Henriques family also worked as ship captains (letter of Jul. Margolinsky, Librarian, Jewish Community, Copenhagen, to Bertram Korn, 1 August 1971, *ibid.*).

132. Studemund-Halévy, *Biographisches Lexikon*, 24.
133. Pullan, *Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice*, 75, n. 13, and 216.
134. Studemund-Halévy, *Biographisches Lexikon*, 24; Isaac Cassuto, "Aus dem ältesten Protokollbuch der Portugiesisch-jüdischen Gemeinde in Hamburg," *Jahrbuch der Jüdisch-Literarischen Gesellschaft* 8 (1910): 280.
135. Martin, *Schwarze Teufel*, 66.
136. Wiznitzer, *Jews in Colonial Brazil*, 46. Querido-Belmonte "played a part" in the founding of the Dutch East India Company in 1602, according to Henry Méchoulán and Gérard Nahon (Menasseh Ben Israel, *The Hope of Israel: The English Translation by Moses Wall, 1652*, Edited, with introduction and notes by, Henry Méchoulán and Gérard Nahon [Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987], 13). Already in the year the Exchange Bank of Amsterdam was established, 1609, he had opened an account (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 174, n. 6). Many notarial records mention his commercial activities. A deed of 19 January 1611 finds him and a fellow Portuguese (Jew?) sending a cargo of merchandise with two other Portuguese (Jews?), with which "they will sail from this city to Portudal (Porto de Halle) and Joal in Guinea with the ship 'St. James' (Santiago) of skipper Herbert Marselissen from Rotterdam." There the two will "sell the merchandise in Guinea or trade them for hides, ivory and such and they will load this return-cargo within six months" (summary in Koen et al., "Notarial Records," SR 5, no. 2 [July 1971], deed no. 455, 19 January 1611; GAA not. arch. 62, fol. 218v). A deed from the next September finds him sending a cargo of "goods and merchandise" directly with skipper Douwe Annes from Enkhuizen "to Cabo Verde, Portudal and Joal in Guinea and from there to Leghorn" (summary in Koen et al., "Notarial Records," SR 6, no. 1 [January 1972], deed no. 574, 19 September 1612; GAA not. arch. 128, fol. 182-83).
137. H. P. Salomon, "The 'De Pinto' Manuscript: A 17th Century Marrano Family History," SR 9, no. 1 (January 1975): esp. 32-34.
138. Reproduced in Mozes Heiman Gans, *Memorbook: History of Dutch Jewry from the Renaissance to 1940 with 1100 Illustrations* (Baarn: Bosch & Keuning, 1977), 111.
139. Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders*, 177.
140. Maza, *Servants and Masters*, 206; see also Hecht, *Continental and Colonial Servants*, 36.
141. Hecht, *ibid.*, 35; Fairchild, *Domestic Enemies*, 158-59.
142. See the brief biographical sketches in Wilhelmina C. Pieterse, ed., *Livro de Bet Haim Do Kahal Kados de Bet Yahacob: Original Text* (Assen: Van Gorcum & Co., 1970), 190; Henry V. Besso, *Dramatic Literature of the Sephardic Jews of Amsterdam in the XVIIth and XVIIIth Centuries* (New York: Hispanic Institute, 1947), 53-56. According to Lydia Hagoort, he imported sugar from Brazil (Tillema, "Zwarte slaaf," 4).
143. Pieterse, *Livro de Bet Haim*, 36.
144. *Ibid.*, 50.
145. Tillema, "Zwarte slaaf," 3.
146. Quoted and translated in Cyrus Adler, "A Contemporary Memorial Relating to Damages to Spanish Interests in America Done by Jews of Holland (1634)," *PAJHS* 17 (1909): 49; see also Hermann Kellenbenz, *A Participação da companhia de judeus na conquista holandesa de Pernambuco* (Paraíba: Universidade Federal da Paraíba, 1966). The language involved would presumably have been Portuguese, though given the para-noia behind Iberian intelligence, Hebrew might be meant, for use as a secret medium

for conspiracy. No Mosen Coen is mentioned by any of the contemporary chroniclers who covered the events (though he could have captained one of the fleet's vessels). The intelligence report could have referred to ■ Colonel Hans Coen or Koin who attacked Elmina and elsewhere, albeit in 1637 (see Boxer, *Dutch in Brazil*, 84-85). Charges such as these, positing conspiracies between (crypto-) Jews and Black slaves, repeatedly percolated out of the Spanish and Portuguese colonies during this period of heightened competition between colonial powers.

147. Koen, et al., "Notarial Records," SR 20, no. 1 (July 1986): deed no. 2581, 14 March 1622.
148. The financial vulnerability of servants posed ■ universal problem; for eighteenth-century France, see Maza, *Servants and Masters*, 97-100.
149. Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 152, citing 13 October 1659; MS, Padthuisen, 2888 (*Notarieel Archief, Notaris Pieter Padthuisen*), GAA.
150. Treated in Chapter 8.
151. On the lack of assigned seating for women, see Arnold Wiznitzer, "The Merger Agreement and Regulations of Congregation Talmud Torah of Amsterdam (1638-39)," *Historia Judaica* 20, no. 2 (October 1958): 115; Swetschinski, "Portuguese Jewish Merchants," 384.
152. Swetschinski, *ibid.*, 444-45.
153. Egon Wolff and Frieda Wolff, *Judeus, judaizantes e seus escravos* (Rio de Janeiro, 1987), 17, cited GAA 334, no. 19, 626, year 5431 (1671), which I was unable to find. However, an entry for 5434 (1674) lists a Salamoh Faia - without mention of his being a mulatto - who gave 10 florins (GAA 334, no. 19, 696). Either the Wolffs erred or two separate entries exist. Finding out more about the lives of Selomoh Faya, other Amsterdam Blacks and mulattos, and their children remains a major desideratum. An Aron Faia is listed as one of the married men of the community in the Memoria de las Personas que ay en la Nacion cazadas (19 Sivan 5435 [1675], printed in J. Mendes dos Remedios, *Os Judeus portugueses em Amsterdam* [Coimbra: F. França Amado, 1911], 199. A Jeosuah and a Moseh Faia (Aron's sons) appear in the list of young and single men, Memoria de los mosos, solteros que ay en la Nacion de 13 Años ariva (same date), also in Mendes dos Remedios, *Judeus portugueses em Amsterdam*, 208. It has been impossible, however, to prove any relations connecting these figures.
The research efforts of Lydia Hagoort, which came to my attention too late for inclusion, are already helping fill out our understanding. Notarial deeds from 1656 indicate that one Jewish man legally acknowledged the legitimacy of his son, borne by a slave woman, while another man came from Brazil declaring that he brought his woman slave with him only because she "mercifully beseeched" to remain with him. Hagoort speculates that this statement sought to prove her free-willing decision (Tillema, "Zwarte slaaf," 3-4).
154. See Maza, *Servants and Masters*, 96-106.
155. Koen, et al., "Notarial Records," SR 5, no. 2 (July 1971): deed nos. 514-15, 24 January 1612.
156. Koen, et al., "Notarial Records," SR 6, no. 1 (January 1972): deed no. 561, 3 August 1612; GAA NA 62, fol. 461.
157. GAA NA 383A, fol. 209-9°, signed affidavit of Jeronimo Pimentel before notary Niculao Jacobs, 6 June 1620; translated also in Koen et al., "Notarial Records," SR 16, no. 2 (November 1982): deed no. 2119.

158. "Livro de pregoens," 35.
159. A wonderful treatment of this theme can be found in Blumenthal, "Implements of Labor," 203-19.
160. Entries of 22 Ijar 5480 [1720] and 24 menahem [Av] 5482 [1722], "Livro de pregoens," 46-47, 51.
161. Pieterse, *Livro de Bet Haim*, 91.
162. *Ibid.*, 98. Abraham Aboab, the owner, stood among the signatories to a 1647 communal ordinance making an additional separate section for Blacks and mulattos (see Chapter 8).
163. Pieterse, *Livro de Bet Haim*, 121.
164. *Ibid.*, 140.
165. *Ibid.*, 122.
166. *Ibid.*, 123.
167. *Ibid.*, 139.
168. *Ibid.*, 97.
169. Yosef Kaplan, "'Jewish Refugees from Germany and Poland in Amsterdam During the Thirty Years War and at the Time of the Chmielnitsky Massacres'" [Hebrew], in *Culture and Society in Medieval Jewish History: A Collection in Memory of Haim Hillel Ben Sasson*, edited by Menahem Ben-Sason (Jerusalem, 1989), 593.
170. Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 7.
171. Pieterse, *Livro de Bet Haim*, 134.
172. "Term of the Resolution which the Senhores of the Mahamad took, that it was necessary to make a New Row in the Cemetery in order to have buried in it Black Jews and other persons who appear unworthy to be buried in the ordinary row" ("Livro de Bet Haim," 1680-1716, GAA 334, no. 916, first doc. = CAHJP microfilm reel HM2 1808, no pagination).
173. The records covering the years 1649-80 have been lost and I was unable to find those pertaining to the period from 1630 to 1649.
174. "Livro de Bet Haim, 1680-1716," 31, 46, 54, 104, 140-43, 155, 159, 163, 182, 189.
175. "On the 8th of Sh'vat was bathed a Woman, moorish by Nation, maid of Abraham Israel monsanto, who is now named Sarah With the order and License of the Gentlemen of the Mahamad in the presence of the Gentlemen Haham R. Ishac Aboab, Haham Joseph de Faro, and Rubi [?] Salom ben Joseph" (Livro dos acordos da Nação e ascamot desde . . . das trez kehilot a . . . no ano 5398, GAA 334, no. 19, fol. 742, ■ Sh'vat 5423 [1663] = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1518, no pagination).
176. I have not been able to identify this person, who might have been connected with the brothers Joseph and Samuel Palache, who arrived in 1608 from Fez, to become important and founding members of the community (Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 46).

Chapter 4

1. Bruce Robbins, *The Servant's Hand: English Fiction from Below* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), x.
2. *Ibid.*
3. *Ibid.*

4. Josephus, *Jewish Antiquities*, Books, 1–3, translated and edited by H. St. J. Thackeray, Loeb Classical Library, vol. 242 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 269, n. b.
5. Flusser, *Sefer Yosippon*, 2:22.
6. For instance: Ibn Ezra, *Perushei ha-Torah*, ad loc. Num. 12:1; Joseph Bekhor Shor, ad loc. Num. 12:1, citing *Divrei Ha-yamim shel Moshe*; *Da'at Zekenim mi-Ba'alei ha-Tsafot*, ad loc. Num. 12:1; Efra'im b. R. Shimshon, *Perush Rabeinu Efra'im*, ad loc. Num. 12:1, citing *Divrei Ha-yamim shel Moshe* as providing a plausible explanation; Avigdor Tsarfati, *Perushim u-P'sukim al ha-Torah* (Jerusalem: Hararei Kedem Institute, 1996), ad loc. Num. 12:1, who presented this option as one plausible interpretation ("there are those who interpret"); Rashbam; Hizkuni (Hizkiyahu b. Manoah; mid-thirteenth century), ad loc. Num. 12:1, citing *Divrei Ha-yamim shel Moshe*; Zazza, *Mekor Hayyim*, 32a–b (on Exod. 4:15 and 4:25); Yosef ibn Kaspi (Arles, Tarascon, Aragon, Catalonia, Majorca, Egypt, Fez; 1279–1340), *Metsuraf le-Kesef* (Cracow: Yosef Fischer, 1906), 254–55; Yehoshua ibn Shu'ib (late fifteenth century; Portugal, Salonika), *D'rashot al ha-Torah* (Constantinople, 1523), parshat be-Ha'alot'ha, citing *Divrei Ha-yamim shel Moshe*; *Yalkut Shimon*; Moshe Alsheikh, *Torat Moshe* (Venice, 1601), ad loc. Num. 12:1; Hayyim b. Yosef Vital (1542–1620), *Sha'ar ha-P'sukim* (Jerusalem, 1868), 96a (parshat be-Ha'alot'ha), in the name of his teacher Yitshak Luria (in two versions which he said he found among Luria's writings) and citing *Divrei Ha-yamim shel Moshe*. Luria's exegesis was also quoted by Berehya Baruh [b. Yitshak Izak], *Zera Banit* (Amsterdam: Shlomo b. Yosef Proops, 1730), 2d drush on be-Ha'alot'ha.
7. Eleazar b. Judah of Worms, ad loc. Num. 12:1, who seems to have had Tsiporah born of Yitro and a Kushite woman; Efra'im b. Shimshon, ad loc. Num. 12:1, some manuscript versions of whose commentary explained this more fully, citing unknown sages (אחרים) who told that "Yitro went to Kush and took a wife and bore Tsiporah"; Lombroso, *Tanakh with Commentary*, ad loc. Num. 12:1; Yoshiahu b. Yosef Pinto, *Sefer Kesef Mezukak* (Venice, 1628), drush 2: Moshe went to Kush and married Tsiporah, daughter of priests (כֹּהֲנִים); Ishac Aboab da Fonseca, *PARAFRASIS COMENTADO Sobre el pentateuco* (Amsterdam: Iacob de Cordova, 1681), ad loc. Num. 12:1.
8. Few medieval rabbis brought a similar exegesis. Some manuscript versions of the biblical commentary of Efra'im b. Shimshon relate that "Tsiporah died and [Moshe] took a Kushite woman to serve in the house, but 'the king did not know her'" [1 Kings 1:4], i.e., Moshe never had intimate relations with her (Efra'im b. R. Shimshon, *Perush Rabeinu Efra'im*, ad loc. Num. 12:1).
9. The redactors of the *General estoria* of Alfonso X mentioned as one possible explanation of this biblical passage the exploits of Moysen defending Ethiopia and his subsequent marriage with princess Tharbe, "the negress / la negra," and also did not mention Moysen's failure to consummate the marriage. We will see later in this chapter why this might have been so in light of Christian exegesis of this passage.
10. In accord with the first edition, *Divrei Ha-Yamim Shel Moshe Rabeinu* (Constantinople, 1517), 3a. The 1544 and 1605 editions from Venice are identical. The *targum* of Pseudo-Jonathan already mentioned that Moshe stayed away from his Kushite Queen. Among the early modern exegetes who wrote that Moshe kept a sword between them in bed and never consummated the marriage was Vital, *Sha'ar ha-P'sukim*, 96a (in the name of Yitshak Luria).

11. For example: Tuviah b. Eliezer (turn of eleventh/twelfth century), *Midrash Lekah Tov*, ad loc. Num. 12:1; Ya'akov b. Asher (known as Ba'al ha-Turim; 1269–1343; Toledo), *Perush Ba'al ha-Turim al ha-Torah le-Rabeinu Ya'akov b'R. Asher al-Pi Kitvei-Yad u-Defus Rishon* (Jerusalem: Feldheim, 1993), ad loc. Num. 12:1; Natanel b. Yeshayahu, *Me'or ha-Afeila*, ad loc. Num. 12:1; Zecharia b. Shlomo ha-Rofe, *Midrash ha-Hefets*, ad loc. Num. 12:1; Eliahu b. Nisim Daveih ha-Cohen (Aleppo), *Birkat Eliahu*, reprint of Constantinople, 1552 (Livorno, 1794), ad loc. Num. 12:1; Yosef b. Hayyim Tsarfati, *Yad Yosef* (Venice: Pietro and Lorenzo Bragadin, 1616), 230a, 2d drush on be-Ha'alot'ha; Menasseh Ben Israel, *Humas o Cinco Libros de la Ley Divina. Juntas las Aplitarot del año. Con una perfecta glosa, en forma casi de Paraphrases, llena de Tradiciones, y Explicaciones de los Antiguos Sabios. Obra nueva y de mucha utilidad, principalmente para los que no entienden los Comentarios Hebraicos* (Amsterdam, 5415), 15; Shlomo Alghazi, *Sh'ma Shlomo* (Izmir, 1658), 42b–43a; Yehuda Leib b. Yosef Pohovitsker, *K'ne Hahma* (Frankfort an der Oder, 1681), 15b–16a (drush shabbat ha-r'shuva); Mordehai ha-Cohen, *Sifte Cohen* (N.p., 1690), 126a, citing *Divrei Ha-yamim shel Moshe* at length and nearly verbatim; José Franco Serrano, *LOS CINCO LIBROS DE LA SACRA LEY* (Amsterdam: Mosseh Dias, 1695), 442 (ad loc. Num. 12:1); Pinhas b. Filtá (Wlodawa, Poland; d. before 1718), *B'rit Shalom* (Frankfort am Main: Johann Kelner, 1718), 93b.
12. Ibn Ezra, *Perushei Ibn Ezra*, ad loc. Num. 12:1 ("Tsiporah was black and resembled a Kushite"). Shmuel Zazza (fourteenth century; Valencia) vehemently attacked Ibn Ezra's figurative explication (*Mekor Hayyim*, 95a [ad loc. Num. 12:1]).
13. Ha-Cohen, *Birkat Eliahu*, ad loc. Num. 12:1.
14. The system in which the letters of the Hebrew alphabet are each made equivalent to a number. The sum of the combined letters of a Hebrew word can then be homiletically manipulated because it matches the sums of other words.
15. *Sifre Bamidbar*, ad loc.; a nearly identical version of this midrash appears in *Midrash Tanhuma* 13:96.
16. My reading of this midrash agrees in many respects with that of Daniel Boyarin, *Carnal Israel: Reading Sex in Talmudic Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 159–65.
17. See Boyarin, Daniel, "Racism," 7.
18. Tobin Siebers, *The Mirror of Medusa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), 42.
19. Ibid.
20. Ibid.
21. Silva Horta, "Imagem do africano," 59.
22. The structure of this interpretation was fully laid out in Alfonso X, *General estoria*, 1:630 (bk. 22, ch. 17).
23. See, for instance, the praise of the saintly gentile men and virgins of Africa in Alfonso X, *General estoria*, 1:54 (bk. 2, ch. 30).
24. Tostado, *Las XIII cuestiones*, 38 (bk. 1, ch. 8). Tostado may have been following the identical absence in Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, which is known to have also found its way into its fourteenth-century Portuguese translation. Knowledge of Comestor's text in Spain is not difficult to imagine. See Silva Neto, *Bíblia medieval portuguesa*, 131 (Num. ch. 3).
25. Avraham Saba, *Zror ha-Mor* (Warsaw, 1879), ad loc. Num. 12:1.

26. "And Miriam said [this] for no other reason than that because she is a Kushite and black did he avoid intimacy with her" (Avigdor Tsarfati, *Penushim*, ad loc. Num. 12:1); see also R. Shmuel b. Meir (Rashi's grandson; ca. 1080–1158); Hizkuni (mid-thirteenth century; France), ad loc. Num. 12:1. Ibn Ezra and Shmuel Zarza presented the possibility that Miriam and Aharon had meant that Moshe stopped having relations with this woman on account of her being unattractive, perhaps implying a direct connection between her being a Kushite and her being unattractive.
27. Efra'im b. R. Shimshon, *Penish Rabeinu Efra'im*, ad loc. Num. 12:1 (Ashkenazic script MS only).
28. Gaon, *Influence*, 3.
29. Gross, Avraham, *Avraham Hayyim*, 193–215 (Appendix 5), printed excerpts based on MS Hamburg 256 (S. 1095) as "Kovets Ma'amarim al Parshi'ot ba-Torah."
30. Gross, Avraham, *Avraham Hayyim*, 209.
31. The well-known preacher Shem Tov ibn Shem Tov (2d half of fifteenth century; Spain) proffered a similar reading. Mistakenly arguing that as prophets they too would have been forbidden to have intimate relations with their spouses, Miriam and Aharon charged "that Moshe did not avoid relations with Tsipora except for the reason that she is black and ugly, not due to the holiness of God, but because she is a Kushite" (Shem Tov ibn Shem Tov, *D'rashot ha-Torah* [Salonika, 1525], parshat be-Ha'alot'ha). Other sources for this interpretation of the accusation against Moshe include the d'rashot of Yosef Karo, printed in Yosef Karo (1488–1575), *Or Zedekim* (Salonika, 1809), 34b (parshat be-Ha'alot'ha) ("because she was really a Kushite / בשביל שהיה כושיה כחש").
32. Yitshak b. Yosef Karo, *Toldot Yitshak*, ad loc. Num. 12:1. The famous Yosef Karo, compiler of the *Shulkhan Arukh*, was the author's adopted nephew.
33. See the *Diálogo* of Enrique de Mota, between a cleric and his Black maidservant (quoted in Kurlat, "Sobre el negro," 383–84, 389) or the character of Lucrecia in *El Santo Negro Rosambuco*. One sixteenth-century visitor to Ayamonte characterized the principally Black women slaves there as "*hermosas y amorosas*" (Antonio Manuel González Díaz, *La esclavitud en Ayamonte durante el antiguo régimen* [Huelva: Diputación Provincial de Huelva, 1997], 23). For early-seventeenth-century English depictions of Black women as whores, purveyors or objects of sexual desire, see Kim F. Hall, *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1995), 90, 97, 188–89.
34. A[?]belda, *Olat Tamid*, 193b.
35. Ashkenazi, Eliezer, *Ma'asei Adonai*, 152b–153a; Tsarfati, *Yad Yosef*, 230a, 2d drush on be-Ha'alot'ha, similarly rejected Rashi's (and hence Sifre's) explanation (הם דוחק).
36. Ashkenazi, *Ma'asei Adonai*, 153a.
37. Hayyim Hillel Ben-Sasson, "Ashkenazi, Eliezer Ben Elijah the Physician," in *EJ*, 3: 725–26.
38. R. Ashkenazi expressed some awareness of the extreme nature of his interpretation, breaking off at one point to beg readers, "do not be astonished at me in that I say that 'Kushite woman' is a name for the glass that doesn't shine," and will say 'how do I dare to say [that this is] the straightforward meaning of the verses?'" (Ashkenazi, *Ma'asei Adonai*, 153a).
39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.

41. Alsheikh, *Torat Moshe*, ad loc. Num. 12:1. Yet other more or less contemporary authors presented a seemingly straightforward appreciation of the attractiveness of Kushite women; see Ya'akov b. Shmuel Hagiz (end of sixteenth century; Fez), *M'vakesh ha-Shem* (Venice, 1596), 229a–231a (3d drush).
42. Alsheikh, *Torat Moshe*, ad loc. Num. 12:1. Alsheikh's rejection, too, had precedents and contemporary adherents. Most vehement was that of Ibn Kaspi, *Metsuraf le-Kesef*, 254–55: "and whence did Onkelus get it to interpret 'Kushite woman' [as] 'beauty'? for they are as opposite as black and white." Yet Ibn Kaspi accepted the straightforward reading of the text: that Moshe had taken as a second wife a Kushite. See also Karo, *Toldot Yitshak*, ad loc. Num. 12:1, quoted earlier in the chapter; Pinto, *Kesef Mezukak*, drush 2: "and as to the words of our sages, that she was attractive, why does the text apply to her the term 'Kushite'?"
43. Alsheikh, *Torat Moshe*, ad loc. Num. 12:1.
44. My emphasis; Hayyim b. Yosef Hazan, *Shnot Hayyim* (Venice: Bragadin, 1693), 155.
45. Hazan cited "Rabbi Y. A., may his memory be a blessing," perhaps referring to his father, Rabbi Yosef b. Eliahu Hazan.
46. Shmuel b. Hayyim b. Yosef Vital, *Mekor Hayyim* (Livorno, 1771), 67a (drush for Rosh Hodesh Adar on parshat T'rumah).
47. I have been able to find no information about this author, other than that he was a student of R. Yisrael b. Meir di Curiel (1502?–after 1571), who taught in Safed after 1535 (Hayyim Yosef David Azulai, *Sifrei Shem ha-G'dolim*, 2 vols. [Brooklyn, NY: R. S. Sharf, 1983], 1:138).
48. Mordehai ha-Cohen, *Sifsei Cohen*, 126a (ad loc. Num. 12:1).
49. This is a play on words based on the Hebrew root.
50. Hurvits, *Shnei Lulot*, 1:309 (masekhet Shavu'ot, #241–42).
51. Rashi to Num. 12:1.
52. Franco Serrano was the son-in-law of the prominent rabbi, author, and teacher Moses Raphael d'Aguilar (d. 1679), who had lived and served in Dutch Brazil during the 1640s. Franco Serrano directed the education at different Sephardic academies of Amsterdam and was known as a Hebrew poet (J. S. da Silva Rosa, *Geschiedenis der Portugeesche Joden Te Amsterdam, 1593–1925* [Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1925], 104).
53. Franco Serrano, *Cinco libros*, 442 (ad loc. Num. 12:1).
54. Sebastián de Covarrubias Orozco, *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española*, orig. Madrid, 1611, edited by Felipe C. R. Maldonado, revised by Manuel Camarero, Nueva Biblioteca 1611, de Erudición y Crítica, 7 (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1994) defined *Ironía* as saying de Erudición y Crítica, 7 (Madrid: Editorial Castalia, 1994) defined *Ironía* as saying something in a way that hearers sense the opposite in meaning. It is thus equivalent to *dissimulator in oratione*.
55. Tsarfati, *Yad Yosef*, 230a, 2d drush on be-Ha'alot'ha.
56. Alghazi, *Sh'ma Shlomo*, 42b.
57. "Sermão prêgado a uma confraria de escravos," in Antonio Vieira, *Padre Antonio Vieira: sermões prêgados no Brasil*, Vol. 2-A: *Vida social e moral na colônia*, 2d improved ed., edited by Hernani Cidade (N.p. [Lisbon?]: Divisão de Publicações e Biblioteca, Agência Geral das Colônias, 1940), 3:111. In a 1662 sermon, for which Vieira and other Jesuits were expelled from Maranhão for their defending the liberty of the Indians under Jesuit charge, Vieira went so far as to interpret the words of Song of Songs 1:5 ("Daughters charge, Vieira went so far as to interpret the words of Song of Songs 1:5 ('Daughters of Jerusalem, look not at me that I am black, for the sun has discolored me') as having

- been said by Moses' Ethiopian wife! ("Prêgado na Capela Real à Rainha Regente na menoridade de El-Rei, em presença de ambas as Majestades," in Vieira, *Sermões*, 3:398). Here Vieira drew on an exegesis preferred already by Abelard (C. K. Scott-Moncrieff, trans., *The Letters of Abelard and Heloise* [New York: Knopf, 1942], 88–89).
58. See Matthew Poole, *Synopsis criticorum aliorumque scripturae interpretum* (London, 1669–76), 1:656–57.
 59. See, for example, Robert Bonfil, "The History of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews in Italy," in *Moreshet Sepharad: The Sephardi Legacy*, edited by Haim Beinart (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Hebrew University, 1992), 2:235.
 60. Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 182.

Chapter 5

1. See Leo de Modena, *The Divan of Leo de Modena: Collection of His Hebrew Poetical Works*, edited by Simon Bernstein (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1932), 33–45.
2. See, for example, David M. Goldenberg, "Rabbinic Knowledge of Black Africa (Sifre Deut. 320)," *Jewish Studies Quarterly* 5 (1998): 318–28. A form similar to the Arabic form for Zanj occurs in the Aramaic translation of Pseudo-Jonathan, apparently as the name of a people of Kush.
3. Richard Schulman, "Cush (Kush)," in *EJ*, 5:1174.
4. Ancient Greeks called the whole of East Africa Kush.
5. Commentary to B.T. Sanhedrin 108b.
6. Ibn Ezra, *Perushei ibn Ezra*, comm. to Gen. 9:25.
7. Eleazar b. Judah of Worms, *Penish ha-Rokeah al ha-Torah*, 3 vols., edited by Chaim Konyevsky (Bnei Brak, 1978–81), ad loc. Gen. 10:7.
8. David Levi, *Lingua sacra*, 3 vols. (London: W. Justins, Printed for the Author, 1785–87). s.v. "Kushi." The citations referred to B.T. Sukkah 32a and Bava Batra 47b.
9. *The Ladino Bible of Ferrara (1553), a Critical Edition*, Moshe Lazar (Culver City, CA: Labyrinthos, 1992), ad loc. Jer. 13:23; *Ladino Pentateuch (Constantinople, 1547)*, edited by Moshe Lazar (Culver City, CA: Labyrinthos, 1988), ad loc. Num. 12:1.
10. David B. Ruderman, *The World of a Renaissance Jew: The Life and Thought of Abraham Ben Mordecai Farissol* (Cincinnati, OH: Hebrew Union Press, 1981), 134–36. On Farissol and medieval Jewish Italian ideas about Blacks and the exotic, see also Ariel Toaff, *Mostri giudei: l'immaginario ebraico dal medioevo alla prima età moderna* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1996), esp. ch. 3 ("Il Messia negro"). Montalboddo's work was *Paesi novamente ritrovati e novo mundo da Alberico Vesputio fiorentino intitolato* (Vicenza, 1507). A facsimile reprint of a 1508 edition from Milan, on which Ruderman and I relied, was issued as *Paesi novamente ritrovati & Novo Mondo da Alberico Vesputio Florentino intitolato*, Vespucci Reprints, Texts and Studies, 6 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1916).
11. Avraham Farissol, *Igeret Orhot Olam*, orig. Ferrara, 1525 (Venice: Juan Digara, 1587), 22b (ch. 21). Chapters 15 through 23, on Africa, closely follow Montalboddo's synopsis of Da Cadamosto and De Sintra (Ruderman, *World of a Renaissance Jew*, 231, n. 19).
12. Farissol, *Igeret Orhot Olam*, 23 (ch. 21).
13. *Ibid.*, 27. Farissol cited Montalboddo, bk. 2, ch. 60.
14. Ruderman, *World of a Renaissance Jew*, 136.

15. Sambari, *Sefer Divrei Yosef*, 114–15, see also 119. The map of Africa from the 1513 Strasbourg edition of Ptolemy's *Geography* had one of the three lake sources of the Nile lying just south of ■ "Cinamonifera Regio," though without ■ magnetic mountain (printed in Grafton, Shelford, and Siraisi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 52).
16. Yosef Yisashar b. Elhanan Baer, *Sh'losha Srigim* (Venice: Bragadin, 1681), 55b (on haftarat Kedoshim according to the Ashkenazic rite). The author, ■ student of Mordecai Jaffe and Yehudah Loew b. Bezalel (Maharal), brought the opinion in the name of Radak, who brought it in the name of Ibn Ezra, all of whom were commenting on Amos 9:7. Baer went on to contrast this with the sexual chastity of biblical Jewish women.
17. Robert Gainsh penned a detailed narrative of the second English voyage to sub-Saharan Africa, in 1554, and described how the "women are common: for they contracte no matrimonie, neyther have respecte to chastitie" (Richard Eden and Richard Willes, eds., *The History of Travayle in the West and East Indies, and Other Countreys Lying Either Way* [London, 1577], 349r). The Dutch traveler Hugh van Linschoten depicted the women of central Africa as "much given to lust and uncleanness, specially with straungers, which among them is no shame" (see the English translation, John Huighen van Linschoten, *His Discourse of Voyages Unto Ye Easte & West Indies* [London: John Wolfe, n.d. (1598)], 200).
18. The classical speedy one-footed inhabitants of part of Ethiopia made an appearance in the widely circulated *The Voyages and Trauailes of Sir John Maundevile* (London, 1583), 53r–53v; Spanish allusions to Black monstrosity can be found in Rodríguez Martín and López Adán, *Eslavitud en Toledo*, 5–8, 57–59, 64–67, 148–49; seventeenth-century Italian sources in Zakiya Hanafi, *The Monster in the Machine: Magic, Medicine, and the Marvelous in the Time of the Scientific Revolution* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 80–83.
19. These linkages were made already in classical texts and imported into the Africanist discourse of the medieval monotheisms. For instance, Ramon Lull's *Blanquerna* (1283): "The people there are all idolatrous Negroes. . . . There are numerous idolater kings . . . The people there are all idolatrous Negroes. . . . The birds and the beasts. . . . They are and princes there who worship the sun, the stars, the birds and the beasts. . . . They are negroes; they observe no law" (quoted in Miller, *Blank Darkness*, 40).
20. Samuel Usque, *Consolation for the Tribulations of Israel*, translated by Martin A. Cohen (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1965), 221; Samuel Usque, *Consolação às tribulações de Israel: Edição de Ferrara, 1553*, with an introduction by Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi (Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1989), 2:227–28.
21. Usque, *Consolation*, 85.
22. . . . y los temerosos de Dios, fundan el palacio de la Sabiduria, en los cimientos del temor, por no haver ciencia como temer el Divino castigo; ni delirio como despreciarlo con las presunciones de excederlo: los primeros que no la preciaron fueron los que el noticioso Aldrete llama *Evileos*, descendientes de Chus: y los que temen a Dios son, los que con Salomon dominan a los Evileos, *Evelim*, (Locos) *Temor del Señor es principio de Sabiduria: Ciencia, y castigo los locos despreciaron* (Daniel Levi [Miguel] de Barrios, *Triunpho del gobierno popular, y de la antigüedad holandesa* [N.p., n.d. (1683)], 66.)
23. Menasseh Ben Israel, *Nishmat Hayyim* (Amsterdam: Sh'muel Abravanel Soeiro, 1652), 136a–b (3d art., ch. 24). Menasseh pointed to an event Ben Israel himself witnessed in Amsterdam some five years earlier; Jean Bodin's work on spirits, which told of a sorcerer condemned to burning for having killed two young virgins while in

- the shape of a wolf, his oft-translated *De la démonomanie des sorciers* (Paris, 1580), bk. 2, ch. 6; a text of Petrus Mamoris (מאמור) on sorcerers, probably the *Flagellum maleficorum* (1490); Hiob Fintel (יוב פינצל), who related incidents from Padua in which a sorcerer was caught in the shape of a wolf, in his *Wunderzeichen: warhafte beschreibung u. gründlich verzeichnuss schrecklicher Wunderzeichen u. Geschichten, die von dem Jar M.D.xvii. bis auff jetziges Jar M.D.Lvi. geschehen und ergangen sind* (Jhena, 1556); Jacob Sprenger, by which he meant the 1487 witch-hunting manual *Malleus Maleficarum* of papal inquisitors Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger (probably pt. 1, q. 10; pt. 2, q. 8); to the words of Gulielmus, Archbishop of Tyre, probably to the passage cited in Bodin's *Demonomanie* (bk. 2, ch. 6) relating the same story brought by Sprenger about a sorcerer in Cyprus who turned an English soldier into an ass; a book of Belon (בילון) printed in Paris, a reference also given by Bodin, *Demonomanie* (bk. 2, ch. 6) regarding an event in Cairo, probably from Pierre Belon, *Les Observations de Plusieurs Singularitez et choses memorables, trouvées en Grece, Asie, Judée, Egypte, Arabie, & autres pays estranges* (Paris: Gilles Corrozet, 1553); and a book of Ulrich le Meunier (אורליינר), or Molitor, jurist from Constance and professor at the University of Pavia, dedicated to the emperor Sigismundo, probably his *De laniis et phitonicis mulieribus* [On Female Sorcerers and Witches] (1489). It is doubtful that Ben Israel actually utilized these many sources, as in fact they are all cited within Bodin's *Démonomanie* (bk. 2, chs. 4–6).
24. *Nishmat Hayyim*, third article, ch. 23.
 25. *Ibid.*, ch. 25.
 26. Reprinted in the additional texts brought in Richard Jobson, *The Discovery of the River Gamba*, edited by David P. Gamble and P. E. H. Hair (London: Hakluyt Society, 1999), 253.
 27. João dos Santos, *Etiópia oriental e vária história de cousas notáveis do oriente*, edited by Manuel Lobato, Eduardo Medeiros, and Maria do Carmo Guerreiro Vieira (Lisbon: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses, 1999), 118 (bk. 1, ch. 14). Dos Santos's text was completed by 1609.
 28. Adam Jones, ed. and trans., *German Sources for West African History, 1599–1669*, Studien Zur Kulturkunde (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1983), 58.
 29. Reprinted in the additional texts brought in Jobson, *Discovery*, 296.
 30. Andrew Battell, "The Strange Adventures of Andrew Battell of Leigh in Essex, Sent by the Portugals Prisoner to Angola, Who Lived There, and in the Adjoyning Regions, Neere Eightene Yeeres," in *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, edited by Samuel Purchas (Glasgow: James MacLehose and Sons, 1905), 6:399.
 31. André Álvares de Almada, *An Interim and Makeshift Edition of André Álvares de Almada's Brief Treatise on the Rivers of Guinea: Being an English Translation of a Variorum Text of Tratado Breve Dos Rios de Guiné* (c. 1594) Organised by the Late Avelino Teixeira da Mota, Together with Incomplete Annotation, translated and edited by P. E. H. Hair, edited by Jean Boulègue (Liverpool: Department of History, University of Liverpool, 1984), 1:53 (ch. 6, sec. 4).
 32. Colin A. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God: Blacks in Mexico, 1570–1650* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1976), 322–23.
 33. Diego Ximenez Arias, *Lexicon ecclesiasticum latinohispanicum*... (Braga: António de Maris, 1569), 116v; cited in Francisco Bethencourt, *O imaginário da magia: Feitiçarias,*

- salvadores e nigromantes no século XVI* (Lisbon: Centro de Estudos de História e Cultura Portuguesa/Projecto Universidade Aberta, 1987), 30.
34. See, for example, the sixteenth-century cases recorded (concocted?) by the Franciscan Friar Diego de Landa in the Yucatán (Dennis Tedlock, "Torture in the Archives: Mayans Meet Europeans," *American Anthropologist* 95, no. 1 [1993]: 143, 144). Two fifteenth-century Spanish Dominicans alleged that Jews "use the ashes of the heart of a Christian for magic ritual purposes aimed against Christians," a charge that was also raised in the ritual murder case of the Holy Child of La Guardia (Alisa Meyuhas Ginio, "The Fortress of the Faith – At the End of the West: Alonso de Espina and His *Fortalitium Fidei*." In *Contra Iudeos: Ancient and Medieval Polemics Between Christians and Jews*, edited by Ora Limor and Guy G. Stroumsa [Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1996], 236).
 35. Some defendants mentioned using other fingers as well. The origins of these practices are difficult to isolate. One of the accused, Isabel Braz (tried in 1577), was not of African descent, but an Old Christian from near Monforte. All cited in Bethencourt, *Imaginário da magia*, 159–61. It should be noted that no "Africanisms" are indicated by the scholarship treating the magical behavior even of Blacks and mulattos accused by the Portuguese Inquisition; see Bethencourt, *Imaginário da magia*; Maria Benedita Araújo, *Magia, demônio e força mágica na tradição portuguesa (séculos XVII e XVIII)* (Lisbon: Edições Cosmos, 1994); José Pedro Paiva, *Bruxaria e superstição num país sem "Caça às Bruxas": Portugal 1600–1774* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1997). Paiva cited the eighteenth-century case of a Black slave woman living in Lisbon who utilized an unusual incantation she said her father had taught her in "the forests of Angola," which resembles, perhaps due to the notary's distortion, mock Latin more than anything else: "carinca casundeque carisca" (Paiva, *Bruxaria e superstição*, 129).
 36. Bethencourt, *Imaginário da magia*, 160.
 37. *Ibid.*, 160–161.
 38. See Elliot K. Ginsburg, *The Sabbath in the Classical Kabbalah* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 225–27, 247, n. 26; Meir ibn Gabbai, *Sod ha-Shabbat* (The Mystery of the Sabbath): From the Tola'at Ya'aqov of R. Meir ibn Gabbai, translated and edited by Elliot K. Ginsburg (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1989), 100, n. 54.
 39. "היה איתחא דדוח קא מהדרא למשקל עפרא מחורי כרעיה דרבי חנינא." I thank Jordan Rosenblum for locating this passage for me; it was also brought in Yalkut Shim'oni, parshat va-Ethanan #828; Tehilim #730; Mishle #959.
 40. *The Chronicle of Ahimaaz*, translated and edited by Marcus Salzman, Columbia University Oriental Studies, vol. 18 (New York: AMS Press, 1996 [orig. 1924]), 81. These demons were not connected to Africa, however. I thank Kenneth Stow for this reference.
 41. Anonymous, "A Description and Historicall Declaration of the Golden Kingdome of Guinea, Otherwise Called the Golden Coast of Myna," in *Hakluytus Posthumus or Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 6:340. This text is actually a translation from De Bry.
 42. For instance Ulrich Molitoris ("De lanijs et phitonicis mulieribus" and "Von den unholden oder hexen" reproduced in Ulrich Molitoris, *Schriften*, edited by Jörg Mauz [Constance: Verlag am Hockgraben, 1997]); Petro Mamoris, *Flagellum maleficorum* (N.p., 1566).
 43. Similarly, although Jean Bodin, who at one point served as a judge in a witch trial, had several of the speakers in his *Colloquium Heptaplomeres* support the contemporary (in

contrast to ancient) existence of such sorcery and practices as magical flying and corporeal transformation with citations to European "demonologists" (including Sprenger, Molitor, and Wier), it was the "Muslim" voice of Octavius that corroborated their reality by an ethnographic depiction based on his journey along exotic non-European shores (here Arabia), "where I saw the magic of sorceresses who turned men into asses or wolves and then restored them to human form" (Jean Bodin, *Colloquium of the Seven About Secrets of the Sublime: Colloquium Heptaplomeris de Rerum Sublimium Arcanis Abditis*, edited and translated by Marion Leathers Daniels Kuntz [Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975], 22).

44. "[I]n summa do ist folich hitz / das man sunst auff dem gantzen weiten ertrich verbrennter und schwartzer leüt nit findt weder in Africa" (Sebastian Münster, *Cosmographie oder Beschreibung Aller Länder* [Basel, 1553 (orig. 1545)], 694 [bk. 6]). Le Roy: "The Ethiopians being neere vnto the Sun which burneth them with his beames, are blacke" (Louis Le Roy, *Of the Interchangeable Course, or Variety of Things in the Whole World*, translated by R. A. [London, 1594], 10). Likewise Duarte Pacheco Pereira: "by the great ardor of the sun, [the equinoctial zone] is fatigued and despite all [the sun's] torment greatly populated, by whose cause it is believed that the Ethiopians are so black in color" (Duarte Pacheco Pereira, *Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis*, Reprodução anastática da edição crítica anotada [Lisbon, 1905], edited by Augusto Epifânio da Silva Dias [Lisbon: Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa, 1975], 20 [ch. 1]). See also: Joannes Boemus, *The Fardle of Facions, Conteyning the Aunciente Maners, Customes, and Lawes, of the Peoples Enhabiting . . . Affrike and Asia*, translated by William Waterman (London, 1555), 102r–103r.
45. Miguel Cabello de Balboa, "Miscelanea antártica [1586]," in *Obras* (Quito: Editorial Ecuatoriana, 1945), 1:121–22 (pt. 1, ch. 9).
46. Juan Huarte de San Juan, *Examen de ingenios para las ciencias* (Amsterdam: Juan de Ravestein, 1662), 250.
47. George Sandys, *A Relation of a Journey Begun an: Dom: 1610*, 2d ed. (London, 1615), 136; reprinted in Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrims*, 5 vols. (London, 1625), 2:913. Fellow countryman George Best also denied climatological causes in some editions of his *A True Discourse of the Late Voyages of Discoverie, for the Finding of a Passage to Cathaya* (London, 1578), 28. I discuss Best again in Chapter 6.
48. Avraham b. Yehuda Hazan, *Hiburei Leket* (Lublin, 1631), ad loc. Jer. 13:23.
49. See Chapter 1.
50. Hagiz, *Halakhot Ketanot*, pt. 1, no. 240. The eighteenth-century Italian Yitshak Lampronti cited this in his encyclopedic dictionary of the talmudic vocabulary and conceptual language, *Pahad Yitshak* (Venice, 1741) (see Chapter 10).
51. Benjamin Braude, *Sex, Slavery, and Racism: The Secret History of the Sons of Noah* (forthcoming), will treat the history and significance of this popular notion of teratogenesis, or maternal imagination, at length. The ninth-century Remigius of Auxerre cited such a story from Quintilian in the former's Exposition on Genesis, and many other Greek and Roman sources brought similar tales. Rabbinic variants can be found in Bereshit Rabbah 73:10 and many medieval sources (see Joshua Trachtenberg, *Jewish Magic and Superstition: A Study in Folk Religion* [Philadelphia: Meridian Books/Jewish Publication Society of America, 1961 (orig. 1939)], 187, 303, n. 11). Many of the classical sources used this maternal imagination to explain how Black babies appeared in White Roman families (Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro*,

- 1550–1812 [Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1969], 12). Braude read the theory as evidence for a lack of an essentialist conception of "race." While this might be true, such color changing entailed a mostly negative phenomenon. James R. Aubrey showed how several sixteenth- and seventeenth-century texts presented the Black children of White mothers as monstrous (James R. Aubrey, "Race and the Spectacle of the Monstrous in 'Othello,'" *Clio* 22, no. 3 [Spring 1998]: 221–38). The aberrant nature of the birth of Blacks among Whites can be seen as well from Gregorio Garcia, who cited Heliodorus, Quintilian, and others in stating that among the tawny Indians, the birth of a white infant attracted great notice, just as "among us the [birth of a] black." This attention to the aberrant does not come across as at all positive (Gregorio Garcia, *Origen de los Indios de el Nuevomundo*, 2d ed. [Madrid: Francisco Martinez Abad, 1729 (orig. 1607)], 270 [bk. 4, ch. 23]). Some disputed the actuality of these maternal or otherwise imagined offspring. One seventeenth-century work, whose author, believed to be the wealthy Brazilian planter Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão, was well educated, asserted that "up to the present day nowhere in the world have we seen that black children are produced by white parents" (Ambrósio Fernandes Brandão, *Dialogues of the Great Things of Brazil*, edited and translated by Frederick Holden Hall, William F. Harrison, and Dorothy Winters Welker [Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1987], 91).
52. Farisol, *Igeret Orhot Olam*, ch. 25.
53. Ruderman, *World of a Renaissance Jew*, 140, 235, n. 49; P. M. da Leonessa, *Santo Stefano Maggiore degli Abissini e le relazioni romano-etiopeiche* (Vatican City, 1929), 171–201.
54. Using Gayatri Spivak's terms, we might oppose the "authoritative theoretical production" of scholarly rabbinic discourse with "the unguarded practice of conversation" appearing in personal letters and similar texts (Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, edited by C. Nelson and L. Grossberg [Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1988], 271).
55. Yacov Boksenboim, *Letters of Jews in Italy: Selected Letters from the Sixteenth Century*, Series of Sources: Letters of Jews in Renaissance Italy (Jerusalem: Ben-Zvi Institute/Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1994), 188 (let. 139). The letter writer was Yehiel Baer, business manager of Abraham Yehoshua of ציטורה.
56. Boksenboim, *ibid.*, 109 (let. 58), and see let. 59. The letter writer appears to be Yoav of Camirino, writing from Tolentino.
57. Translated in Mark R. Cohen, *The Autobiography of a Seventeenth-Century Venetian Rabbi: Leon Modena's "Life of Judah"* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1988), 156; the original Hebrew is in Yehuda Aryeh (Leone) Modena, *Sefer Hayei Yehuda*, edited by Avraham Kahana (Kiev, 1911), 61.
58. Saul Levi Mortera, *Tratado da verdade da lei de Moisés: escrito pelo seu próprio penho em português em Amesterdão, 1659–1660: edição facsimilada e leitura do autógrafo* (1659), introdução e comentário, edited by H. P. Salomon (Coimbra: University of Coimbra, 1988), 75 (ch. 11); similarly in the first Spanish translation, Saul Levi Mortera, *Providencia de Dios* (ch. 11); similarly in the first Spanish translation, Saul Levi Machabeu, 1662), 28.
59. The original Hebrew reads: "לץ שמע ממשפח כושים אמו/אביו לא ידע אי מקורו קללה חושב לו Aboab: First Author in America," *PAJHS* 5 [1897]: 130. All of the contemporary Portuguese chronicles agreed on the rebel leader's mulatto status, and some engaged in backbending apologetics in order to harmonize his racial background and patriotic

85. Shmuel Laniado, *Kli Yakar* (Venice, 1603), 321a. Laniado stated that he wrote this already in his commentary to the *Humash*, *Kli Hemdah* (Venice, 1595), which I was not able to check.
86. Letter from Father Juan Rogel to Father Didacus Avellaneda, Nov. 1566 to Jan. 1567, translated in John H. Hann, ed. and trans., *Missions to the Calusa* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1991), 281.
87. Laniado, *Kli Yakar*, 321a. My thanks to Robert Alter for his help in deciphering this passage.
88. Kurlat, "Sobre el negro"; Germán de Granda, "Sobre el origen del 'habla de negro' en la literatura peninsular del siglo de oro," *Prohemio* 2 (1971): 97–109; Tinhorão, *Negros em Portugal*, 234–64.
89. Kurlat, "Sobre el negro," 386. Some scholars picked out these Black characters' speech as "arbitrary lecture or running on / *arbitraria monserga*" and "gibberish / *galimatías*" (Kurlat, "Sobre el negro," 381, n. 2).
90. Reproduced from the facsimile edition, *Hagadat Venezia 5389 – Venice 1629* (Bnei Brak: Shmuel Mor, 1975). This illustration also appeared at the same textual site in a Haggada from Pisa, 1806, produced by Samuel Molkho (found in the Schocken Library, Jerusalem). I thank Ismar Schorsch for notifying me of this reprint.
91. Garcia, *Origen de los indios*, 202 (bk. 4, ch. 22).
92. Braude, "Sons of Noah," 131; Flint, *Rise of Magic*, 333–38, 371.
93. Quoted in Alison Weber, "Saint Teresa, Demonologist," in *Culture and Control in Counter-Reformation Spain*, edited by Anne J. Cruz and Mary Elizabeth Perry (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1992), 175.
94. Bodin, *Colloquium*, 103.
95. Jean Bodin, *On the Demon-Mania of Witches*, translated and edited by Randy A. Scott, edited by Jonathan L. Pearl (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 1995), 41.
96. Anthony Grafton, *Defenders of the Text: The Traditions of Scholarship in an Age of Science, 1450–1800* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), 76.
97. Nora Reyes Costilla and Martín González de la Vera, "El demonio entre los marginales: la población negra y el pacto con el demonio en el norte de Nueva España, siglos XVII y XVIII," *Colonial Latin American Historical Review* 10, no. 2 (Spring 2001): 204.
98. Yehudah Halevi, *Book of the Kuzari, a Book of Proof and Argument in Defense of a Despised Faith, a 15th Century Ladino Translation* (Ms. 17812, B.N. Madrid), edited by Moshe Lazar (Culver City, CA: Labyrinthos, 1990), 3.
99. Yehuda Moscato, *Kol Yehuda*, reprint of Warsaw: R. Isaac Geldman, 1880 (Jerusalem: Hadaran, 1959), 31–32 (ad loc. *Kuzari* 1:1). Moscato's commentary appeared originally in Venice, 1594. Ha-Levi's statement was translated into Spanish without qualification or rebuttal in Jacob b. Yosef Abendana, *CUZARY LIBRO De grande ciencia y mucha doctrina. Discursos que passaron entre el Rey Cuzar. y un singular Sabio de Ysrael, llamado. R. Yshach Sanguery* (Amsterdam, 1663), 3. The similar statement of Rambam appeared untransformed in *Maimonides, Guide for the Perplexed, a 15th Century Spanish Translation by Pedro de Toledo* (Ms. 10289, B.N. Madrid), edited by Moshe Lazar (Culver City, CA: Labyrinthos, 1989), 357.
100. Moscato, *Kol Yehuda*, 57.
101. It later appeared, in many editions, under the title *Sefer ha-Mefo'ar* (Cracow, 1570).

102. *Sefer ha-Mefo'ar* (Jerusalem: Ben-Yishai Publishers, 1989), 12. The structure of Molkho/Pires's metaphor comes straight out of Song of Songs Rabbah 1:35, Genesis Rabbah 23:11, and other Rabbinic sources.
103. Alsheikh, *Mar'ot ha-Tsove'ot*, ad loc. Jer. 13:23. Those who sinned a little have soul garments that are spotted like the leopard.
104. Yehuda Aryeh (Leone) Modena, *Zemah Zadik*, reprint of Venice, 1605 ed. (Tel Aviv: Mahbarot le-Sifrut/Mosad ha-Rav Kook, 1949), 30. In a later chapter, on foolishness, Modena discussed those who become fools due to the increase of black bile and sorrow or worry; these individuals come to lack all intelligence (63).
105. Yisashar Berman (late seventeenth/early eighteenth century), *Sefer Mateh Yisashar* (Fürth, 1792), from a sermon given on Shabbat Parshat Tsav, Shabbat ha-Gadol, in 1695.

Chapter 6

1. I have left out Muslim usages from this period, though they are doubtless pertinent, as representative of an already divergent strand of the weave. Some citations dating into the sixteenth century can be found in al-Makkī, *Bunies Prachtgewand*, 29–37.
2. This has been admirably done by Braude, "Sons of Noah," and idem, *Sex, Slavery, and Racism*; Sollors, *Neither Black Nor White*, 78–111; M. [Jean-Pierre] Chrétien, "Les Deux Visages de Cham: Points de Vue Français de XIX^eme Siecle sur les Races Africaines D'Après L'Exemple de L'Afrique Orientale," in *L'Idée de Race dans la Pensée Politique Française Contemporaine*, edited by Pierre Guiral and Émile Temime (Paris: Editions Française Contemporaine, 1977). My efforts here follow their du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1977). My efforts here follow their work closely, as well as the relevant section of Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 64–76. Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, indirectly, and Braude, intentionally, convincingly traced the confusion of medieval and early modern understandings of Ham's identity, significance, and genealogy, but this does not mitigate the import of Ham's curse when applied to Blacks. That is, its results were not altered despite the fact that it was also applied to other peoples.
3. Franco Moretti, *Atlas of the European Novel, 1800–1900* (London: Verso, 1998).
4. Joseph R. Washington, Jr., *Anti-Blackness in English Religion, 1500–1800* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1984), passim; Jordan, *White Over Black*, 17–20, 35–36; see also Edith Sanders, "The Hamitic Hypothesis," *Journal of African History* 10, no. 4 (1969): 521–32. Washington, Jr., stated up front that his "perspective is that of an American Christian social ethicist" (Washington, *Anti-Blackness*, xv). The same trajectory of sixteenth-century Jewish influence was put forward by the French Protestant clergyman Raoul Allier. His effort to pin the origin of the curse of Ham – as servitude or Blackness – on Jewish and Catholic writers comes across clearly through his apologetic (Raoul Allier, "Les Nègres et la Malédiction de Cham," *International Review for the Social Action Activities of the Churches* [Stockholm], November 1929, 393–403). For an incisive critique of Jordan, whose influence cannot be overstated, see Braude, "Sons of Noah," 129–30. Even Marxist Robin Blackburn, perhaps not surprisingly, proffered some mistaken notions of the biblical and midrashic attitudes toward Kush and Kushites (Robin Blackburn, "The Old World Background to European Colonial Slavery,"

one of many textual sites to have pointing it out ■ small hand in the margin – probably ■ novel device for the typesetter – which, along with a laudatory headline, was to help readers identify important passages. Still, Pinhas spent several text columns (with many pointing hands in the margins) sermonizing about/against Kena'an, compared to a few lines regarding Ham.

21. Ashkenazi, *Ma'asei Adonai*, 57a–b.
22. Originally in Bereshit Rabbah 36:7, 11, in the name of R. Yehuda. Karo, *Toldot Yitshak*, ad loc. Gen. 9:25; Ibn Shu'ib, *D'rashot al ha-Torah*, parshat Noah; Efra'im Shlomo b. Aharon of Leczyca [Luntshits], *Kli Yakar* (Lublin, 1601), 11b (on Gen. 9:22); Ben Israel, *Humas*, 15 (gloss to Gen. 9:20); Aboab da Fonseca, *Parafrasis*, 28; Franco Serrano, *Cinco Libros*, ad loc. Gen. 9:18, n. 9.
23. Hayyim Vital in the name of Yitshak Luria, *Likutei Torah*, ad loc. Gen. 9; Efra'im Shlomo b. Aharon of Leczyca [Luntshits], *Kli Yakar*, 11b (ad loc. Gen. 9:22); Mordehai Cohen, *Rosh Mor Dror* (Venice: Ioanni Caion, 1615), 11b; Pinto, *Kesef Mezukak*, parshat Noah, citing the midrash explicitly; Hazan, *Ein Yosef*, 12a–b (first drush), citing the midrash from J.T. Ta'anit 1,64d; Moshe Nirol ha-Cohen (mid-seventeenth century; Poland), *Sefer Birhat Tov* (Venice, 1733), 10b.
24. A[ll]belda, *Olat Tamid*, 56 (parshat Noah).
25. Ben Israel, *Humas*.
26. Yehuda b. Bezalel Löw, *Sefer Hidashei Agadot*, 4 vols. (Jerusalem: N.p., 1972–80), 3:258 (ad loc. B.T. Sanhedrin 108b).
27. Yehuda b. Bezalel Löw, *The Complete Humash Gur Aryeh: Commentary to the Commentary of Rashi on the Humash* [Hebrew], edited by Yehoshua David Hartman (Jerusalem: Jerusalem Institute, 1989), ad loc. Gen. 9:23.
28. Katz, Jacob, *Exclusiveness and Tolerance*, 137, cited this statement as appearing in ch. 29 of the work mentioned. I checked several editions but found nothing of the sort, which is not to say it does not appear elsewhere (Yehuda b. Bezalel Löw, *Sefer G'vurot ha-shem* [Cracow: Yitshak b. Aharon of Prostiz, 1582]).
29. Saba, *Zror ha-Mor*, parshat Noah. Saba could well have taken this approach from Efra'im b. Shimshon (twelfth century; Ashkenaz).
30. Saba, *Zror ha-Mor*, ad loc. Gen. 10:1; see also his commentary to Gen. 9:22.
31. Yishak Arama, *Akeidat Yitshak* (Venice, 1547; orig. Salonika, 1522), 33a [gate 12, parshat Noah].
32. The relationship between the writings of Abravanel and Arama, who barely discussed Blacks, provides an intriguing case study. Parallel passages had been found in the works of both men already by nineteenth-century scholars (see Carmoly, "Toldot Don Yitshak Abravanel"). The parallels in the passages I cite come out clearly. Abravanel and Arama evidently used to meet while Abravanel was in Naples (ca. 1493–94, 1496–1503) to converse on "theological and philosophical subjects" (Netanyahu, *Don Isaac Abravanel*, 296, n. 92). Arama's *Akedat Yitshak*, composed in the 1480s, remained unpublished until after his death, leaving open the possibility that he reworked it in light of these conversations.
33. Printed in Avraham Gross, *Avraham Hayyun*, 268. Gross printed the text, Berahot ha-Torah [Blessings of the Torah] as Appendix 9. It is based on MS Hamburg 256. The passage comes from the Third Gate, Explanation of the Blessings of Moses the Chief Prophet of Israel.

34. Zarza, *Mekor Hayyim*, 11b.
35. Ibid.
36. Arama, *Akeidat Yitshak*, 33a (gate 12, parshat Noah).
37. Pinto, *Kesef Mezukak*, parshat Noah, citing the passage "Ham came out hammed/blackened / יצא חממום" (Bereshit Rabbah 36:5); Hazan, *Ein Yosef*, 12a–b ("Ham was stricken in his skin / לקו חם בעורו [sic]" [B.T. Sanhedrin 108b]). Later in this section I discuss other Jewish thinkers who linked the curse with Blackness.
38. Schedel, *Liber chronicarum* (Nuremburg, 1493); printed in Grafton, Shelford, and Siraisi, *New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, 20.
39. Farisol, *Igeret Orhot Olam*, 5b. Farisol expressed the same opinion in his never-published polemical tract *Magen Avraham* (composed ca. 1500), ch. 73 (Ruderman, *World of a Renaissance Jew*, 232, n. 31).
40. Ruderman, *ibid.* Ruderman speculated that Farisol might have been using the edition of Josephus published in Mantua around 1480 (Ruderman, *World of a Renaissance Jew*, 203, n. 22).
41. Eliahu b. Asher ha-Levi Ashkenazi, *Sefer Meturgeman* (Isny, 1541), s.v. "Afrak."
42. To Shem he gave the fortunate Asia, stored with gold and precious stones and decked with scented and excellent trees. To Japheth he gave the scepter and lordship of all Europe, whose nobility, knowledge and culture surpasses that of all other parts of the universe. And to Ham, the wicked sorcerer [...] he delivered Africa, whose metropolitan city was in Egypt.
(Usque, *Consolation*, 84–85.)
43. Aboab da Fonseca, *Parafrasis*, 21.
44. Moseh de Ishac Dias, *Meditaciones sobre la historia sagrada del Genesis con ponderaciones fundadas en las esplicaciones, y comentarios diferentes de los antiguos, y modernos expositores*, 2d, augmented ed. (Amsterdam: In the House of the Author, 1705), ad loc. Gen. 10:1.
45. Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 190. He cited Chrétien, "Deux Visages de Cham," 174–75. Chrétien nowhere discussed what Blackburn cited him as mentioning. If Poliakov served as the source, being cited in the one sentence Chrétien devoted to the theological activities at the University of Leiden, I could not find any reference in the work adduced (Leon Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth* [New York: Basic Books, 1974]).
46. Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 4:1129.
47. Peter Martyr, "The Decades of the Newe Worlde of West India," translated by Richard Eden, in *The First Three English Books on America*, edited by Edward Arber (Birmingham, 1885), 346.
48. Garcia, *Origen de los indios*, 1 (bk. 1, ch. 1). So also Henry Ainsworth, *Annotations Upon the Five Bookes of Moses, the Booke of the Psalmes, and the Song of Songs, or, Canticles* (London: John Bellamie, 1627), ad loc. Gen. 10:1, though here the progeny of "Iaphets" occupied "part of Europe, with Asia the lesse."
49. On the import of early modern geography for an understanding of "race," see Braude, *Sex, Slavery, and Racism*.
50. Braude, "Sons of Noah," 129, n. 60.
51. Avraham Gedalia, *Brit Avraham* (Livorno, 1650–57), 39a. The obscurity of Gedalia's commentary in relation to the popularity of its source text may be judged by its apparently sole printing in mid-seventeenth-century Livorno; see Ch. B. Friedberg, *Bei Eked Sephardim: Bibliographical Lexicon . . . 1474–1950*, 2d ed., enlarged, improved, and rev., 4 vols. (Tel Aviv: M. A. Bar-Juda, 1951), 2:432 (entry 673). Nonetheless, this edition

- between theocentric and historicist or scientific interpretive strategies may be evident in Genebrard's and Belleforest's citing of a curse of Cham. Frank Lestringant called both authors "Catholic 'zealots'" and recited their opposition – especially Genebrard's – to the hubris of cosmography in attempting to shed theology (Frank Lestringant, *Mapping the Renaissance World: The Geographical Imagination in the Age of Discovery* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994], 5, 12, 24, 28, 54, 121). The context of historicism's rise as a response to the increasing sense of historical and cultural relativism is described in Zachary Sayre Schiffman, *On the Threshold of Modernity: Relativism in the French Renaissance* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991).
77. Possevino's citations appear to be inaccurate, however. Antonio Possevino, *Bibliotheca Selecta de Ratione Studiorum* (N.p., 1607 [orig. 1603?]), bk. 15, ch. 19. He also cited his own earlier commentary to the biblical prophetic books, which I was not able to examine.
 78. Juan de Torquemada, *Monarquía indiana*, facsimile of Madrid, 1723 ed. (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1969), 1:30 (bk. 1, ch. 10), 2:560–62 (bk. 14, ch. 15), 2:569–72 (bk. 14, ch. 19). The work was first published in Seville, 1615.
 79. "Explicação porque são os negros negros," 142–44.
 80. "Explicação porque são os negros negros," 143–44.
 81. Herman Hugo, *De Prima scribendi origine et universa rei literariae antiquitate* (Antwerp: Balthasar & Ioan Moretos, 1617), ch. 20 ("De notis pecudum").
 82. Alonso de Sandoval, *Un tratado sobre la esclavitud*, translated and edited by Enriqueta Vila Vilar (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1987), 74–75. This work first appeared as *Naturaleza, policía sagrada i profana, costumbres i ritos, disciplina i catecismo evangélico de todos etiopes* (Seville: Francisco de Lyra, 1627), but this rare edition, which I was unable to examine, apparently contains numerous errors. Vila Vilar's translation is based on the corrected 1647 edition.
 83. Cited in José Tomás Lopez Garcia, *Dos defensores de los esclavos negros en el siglo XVII* (Maracaibo/Caracas: Biblioteca Corpozulia/Universidad Católica Andrés Bello, 1981), 210–17.
 84. Samuel Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage, or Relations of the World and the Religions Observed in All Ages and Places Discovered from the Creation Unto This Present*, 2d ed. (London, 1614), 52–53 (bk. 1, ch. 10), 564 (bk. 6, ch. 2). Berosus probably cropped up as a source as frequently as he did because of the influential but rather loose "adaptation" of his text written by the Dominican Annius of Viterbo, *Antiquitatum varianum volumina* 18, cum commentariis Fr. Joannis Annii Viterbiensis (Rome, 1498); see Grafton, *Defenders of the Text*, 76–103; Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 64–65.
 85. Richard Jobson, *The Golden Trade or a Discovery of the River Gambia, and the Golden Trade of the Ethiopians* (London, 1623), 52.
 86. I used the abridged reprint of Sandys in Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrims*, 2:913.
 87. Purchas, *ibid.*, 2:913.
 88. *Dictionary of American Biography*, edited by Dumas Malone (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1935), s.v. "Sandys, George." George was the younger brother of Sir Edwin Sandys, whose far more central role in English colonial ventures was discussed in Theodore K. Rabb, *Jacobean Gentleman: Sir Edwin Sandys, 1561–1629* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1998).
 89. *Dictionary of American Biography*, s.v. "Sandys, George"; *Encyclopedia Britannica*, s.v. "Sandys, Sir Edwin."

90. "Respondent Hebraei, per traditionem constare, quòd Canaan primus vidit, & patri indicavit" (Poole, *Synopsis criticorum*, 1:113 [ad loc. Gen. 9:23]).
91. Johann Heinrich Heidegger, *Rashei avot, sive de historia sacra patriarcharum* (Amsterdam: Apud Petrum le Grand, 1667), 627 (exercitatio 20, sec. 3).
92. Best, *True Discourse*, 31.
93. Münster failed to mention any curse on Cham in his retelling of the original dispersion of humankind or in his many pages on Africa (Münster, *Cosmographie*, bk. 1, ch. 29). Postel was perhaps the only Renaissance Christian to have read most of the kabbalistic writings in Hebrew, translating into Latin both the *Sefer yetzirah* (Paris, 1552) and the *Zohar* (unpublished). It makes sense that Genebrard and Belleforest, both of whom critiqued Münster and his *Cosmographia* for blasphemous scientific arrogance, themselves invoked the curse of Cham that Münster left out.
94. Isaac Vossius (1618–1689), *Observatione ad Pomponium Melam de situ orbis* (Hagae-Comitis: Apud Adrianum Vlacq, 1658), 304–5 (ad lib. 3, ch. 9); Heidegger, *Rashei Avot*, 468, 625, 627, 629–31 (ex. 20, sec. 5–8).
95. For instance, Leo Africanus, *In Descriptiones Africa* (1550) – see among its many editions and translations, Juan Leo Africano, *De la Description de africa y de las cosas notables que en ella se encuentran*, vol. 1, Publicaciones del Instituto General Franco para la Investigacion Hispano-Arabe (N.p.: Imperio, 1940), 13; Münster, *Cosmographie*, 42 (bk. 1, ch. 24). The Catholic Agostino Tornielli (Augustin Tornellius; 1543–1622) merely mentioned the opinion that the color of Blacks related to the curse of Ham (*Annales sacri, et ex profanis praecipui* [Antwerp, 1620]).
96. Elizabeth Cary, *The Tragedie of Mariam, Faire Queene of Jewry* (1613); cited in Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 177. In the poem, Herod told Salome that next to Mariam "he hath often tane you for an Ape" and that "You are to her a Sun-burnt Blackamore." After Mariam's execution, Herod lamented her lost Whiteness and wondered why she had to die instead of "some Egiptian blows/Or AETHiopian doudy" (Dympna Callaghan, "Re-Reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam, Faire Queene of Jewry*," in *Women, "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period*, edited by Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker [London: Routledge, 1994], 174–75). According to Callaghan, it is thought that Thomas Lodge's 1602 translation of Josephus's *Antiquities of the Jews* from Greek served as Cary's source for *Mariam* (Callaghan, "Re-Reading Elizabeth Cary's *The Tragedie of Mariam*," 169).
97. For example, Palacios Rubios (ca. 1512–14), *Islas del mar*; López de Gómara (in 1555), *Historia general*, ch. 118.
98. Though authors might also hold positive views of Blacks and still cite the notion of a curse. The astronomer Tycho Brahe (1546–1601) believed that his beloved field of research, astronomy, had been passed down from Noah to Abraham by means of Cham and Kush, and even to the Ethiopians, but he also assigned their Blackness to the biblical punishment wrought onto Cham (Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, IV:1211).
99. Cabello de Balboa, "Miscelanea antártica," 1:121 (pt. 1, ch. 9). Thanks to Benjamin Braude for unwittingly bringing this author to my attention.
100. Garcia, *Origen de los indios*, 101 (bk. 3, ch. 4).
101. Walter Raleigh, *The Historie of the World* (London, 1652, 118–19; cited in Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 143–44, 348, n. 43).
102. Cotton Mather, *The Negro Christianized* (1706), cited in Washington, *Anti-Blackness*, 186.

103. Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 144.
104. Ernst Van den Boogaart, "Colour Prejudice and the Yardstick of Civility: The Initial Dutch Confrontation with Black Africans, 1590-1635," in *Racism and Colonialism: Essays on Ideology and Social Structure*, edited by Robert Ross (Leiden: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers/Leiden University Press, 1982), 46; J. M. Van der Linde, *Surinaamse Suikerheren en Hun Kerk: Plantagekolonie en Handelskerk Ten Tijden Van Johannes Basseliers, Predikant en Planter in Suriname, 1667-1689* (Wageningen: H. Veenman en Zonen, 1966), 78-89; L. R. Priester, "De Nederlandse Houding Ten Aanzien Van de Slavenhandel en Slavernij, 1596-1863" (master's thesis, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, 1986), 38-69.
105. Jordan, *White Over Black*, 19; Sollors, *Neither Black Nor White*, 448, n. 56.
106. See Garcia, *Origen de los indios*, 69-71 (bk. 2, ch. 5), 247 (bk. 4, ch. 23).
107. Da Cadamosto's description of the Canaries, gathered during his 1454 voyage to West Africa, made this connection explicit. He depicted the "perpetual civil war" between contesting leaders with "stones, maces or clubs, and darts or lances," how they "all go naked, except a few who wear goat skins before and behind," and "anoint their skins with goats tallow, mixed up with the juice of certain herbs." They "have neither walled nor thatched houses, but dwell in grottos and caverns of the mountains," feeding "on barley, flesh, and goats milk . . . and some fruits." This account, Da Cadamosto immediately asserted, he learned "from the Christians of the four settled islands, who sometimes go over by night to [the islands still inhabited by the Guanchos] and make prisoners of the natives, whom they send into Spain to be sold as slaves" (Cada Mosto, "Original Journals," 209).
108. William Cunningham, *The Cosmographical Glasse* (London, 1559), 5; Hakluyt, *Principal Navigations* (1589), 102, 161, 795; both cited in Vaughan and Vaughan, "Before Othello," 24, 31. Along these lines, the Dutch jurist Hugo Grotius argued, as did Juan de Torquemada and Guillaume Postell, that the idolatrous American Indians descended from Chàm and his son Chùs, via the idolatrous Ethiopians (Grotius, *Origen. American.*, Dissertatio 1; all cited in Garcia, *Origen de los indios*, 257-59 [bk. 4, ch. 24]).
109. Pacheco Pereira, *Esmeraldo*, 81 (bk. 1, ch. 27), 89 (ch. 29), 91 (ch. 31), 93 (ch. 32), 95 (ch. 33).
110. Hernando del Pulgar, "A Castilian Account of the Discovery of Mina, c. 1472," in *Europeans in West Africa, 1450-1560*, 2 vols., edited and translated by John William Blake (London: Hakluyt Society, 1942), 1:205.
111. *Travels of Leo of Rozmital*, 107, 118.
112. Puckrein, *Little England*, 77. See the constant repetition of the epithet "heathen" that Thomas Tryon's literary "Master" hurled at his slave in the antislavery tract, *Friendly Advice to the Gentlemen-Planters of the East and West Indies* (N.p. [London]: Andrew Sowle, 1684); excerpted in Thomas W. Krise, ed., *Caribbeana: An Anthology of English Literature of the West Indies, 1657-1777* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 52-76. Not once did Tryon have his Master invoke the curse of Ham, and this was at the late date of 1684.
113. Hecht, *Continental and Colonial Servants*, 37-38.
114. *Me'ah B'Rachot [Hundred Blessings]* (Amsterdam, 1687), 184b.
115. I have not been able to find any halakhic precedent for the formula of this blessing. Rambam mentioned a blessing to be said on circumcising a slave. The *Shulkhan Arukh*,

- the *Beit Yosef*, and other authorities stated that a slave undergoing ritual immersion makes a blessing for/on him/herself. But neither Talmud nor any halakhic midrash provided a blessing to be said on the purchase of a slave, though such a blessing can be found in various prayer books from medieval Spain. The fact that the main biblical proof text, Lev. 25:46, frequently appeared in these sources contiguous with the action of buying a slave, even if only as an element in the logic of the ensuing debates over pertinent issues, no doubt inspired the later blessings' formula.
116. Robert Hodge summarizing Lévi-Strauss and Van Gennep (Robert Hodge, *Literature as Discourse: Textual Strategies in English and History* [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990], 177).
117. Exod. 34:11 and Deut. 20:17 explicitly order the destruction of the six Canaanite nations; see also Exod. 33:2; on hints and explicit statements on the survival of some of these peoples, see Josh. 15:63, Judg. 1:21 and 3:5, 1 Kings 9:20, 1 Chron. 11:6, and 2 Chron. 8:7.
118. Hodge, *Literature as Discourse*, 177.
119. 3 July 1571; cited in Graullera Sanz, *Esclavitud en Valencia*, 68, n. 22; a typical bill of sale (from 1675) stated that the slave in question, "a dark black [man] of the Portuguese Indies," was acquired "de buena guerra y no de paz" (Manuel López Molina, *Una década de esclavitud en Jaén: 1675-1685* [Jaén: Ayuntamiento de Jaén, 1995], 36-37).
120. One immediately sees this meeting through the lens of Mignolo's discussion of literacy and colonization (Walter D. Mignolo, *The Darker Side of the Renaissance: Literacy, Territoriality, and Colonization* [Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995], 29-122 [pt. 1: "The Colonization of Languages"]).
121. "Copia de huma petição que o povo e mais moradores e forasteiros fizeram ao Senado da Camara" (cited by Boxer, *Race Relations*, 29).
122. Ibn Khaldûn, *Muqaddimah*, 1:169 ("Genealogists who had no knowledge of the true nature of things imagined that Negroes are the children of Ham"); Ibn Ezra, *Penushei ibn Ezra*, ad loc. Gen. 9:22 ("and there are those who say that the Kushites were cursed . . ."); Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimage*, 545-46 ("Some tell a tale of Chams knowing his wife in the Arke, whereupon by divine curse his sonne Chus was blacke, with all his porteritie"); Sir Thomas Browne, *Pseudoxia Epidemica* (Oxford, 1981), 1:159 ("There is another opinion concerning the complexion of negroes that is not only embraced by many of the more Vulgar Writers . . .").
123. In this I agree with Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 73.
124. Zavala, *Servidumbre natural*, 31.
125. Zavala, *Servidumbre natural*, 32.
126. *Dictionary of American Biography*, s.v., "Sandys, George."
127. Thomas Cooper, *The Blessing of Japheth* [sic], *Proving the Gathering of the Gentiles* (London, 1615), sig. [A2v], 1-3; cited in Vaughan, *Roots of American Racism*, 164.
128. Geronimo Osorio, *De rebus Emmanuelis* (Lisbon, 1571). I checked both *De rebus emmanuelis* (Conimbricæ: Ex Typographia Academico-Regia, 1791) and *Da Vida e feitos de el-rei D. Manuel*, edited by Joaquim Ferreira, translated by Francisco Manuel do Nascimento (Pôrto: Livraria Civilização, 1944).
129. Antonio de Herrera y Tordesillas, *Descripcion de las indias occidentales, o Historia general de los hechos de los castellanos en las islas y tierra firme del mar oceano* (Madrid: En la Oficina Real de Nicolas Rodriguez Franco, 1730), dec. 1, bk. 9, ch. 4.

130. Buenaventura de Salinas y Córdova, *Memorial de las historias del nuevo mundo piru: méritos y excelencias de la ciudad de lima, cabeza de sus ricos y estendidos reynos y el estado presente en el que se hallan*, Colección Clásicos Peruanos (Lima, 1630), 11 (ch. 1); idem, *Memorial de las historias del nuevo mundo piru: méritos y excelencias de la ciudad de lima, cabeza de sus ricos y estendidos reynos y el estado presente en el que se hallan* (Lima: Universidad Mayor de San Marcos, 1957), 11-12.
131. Gregorio Lopez Madera, *Excelencias de la monarchia y reynos de España* (Valladolid: Diego Fernandez de Cordoua, 1597).
132. Possevino, *Bibliotheca*, bk. 15, ch. 19.
133. Marcel Bataillon, "Le 'Clérigo Casas,' ci-devant colon, réformateur de la colonisation," *Bulletin Hispanique* 54 (1952): 368. Friar Francisco de la Cruz was the priest, whose Inquisition file is Archivo Histórico Nacional (Madrid), Leg. 1650, fol. 1320. Benjamin Braude kindly brought this reference to my attention.
134. João de Lucena, *História da vida do padre Francisco de Xavier*, Edição Fac-similada comemorativa do 4.º centenário do seu falecimento. Com um prefácio de Alvaro J. da Costa Pimpão, 2 vols. (Lisbon: Agência Geral do Ultramar, 1952), bk. 1, ch. 14.
135. Jobson, *Golden Trade*, 93.
136. Chrétien, "Deux Visages de Cham," 175.
137. Torquemada, *Monarquía indiana*, 2:566 (bk. 14, ch. 17).
138. Those who did: The Huguenot pastor and professor of theology François Du Jon (Junius; 1545-1602; France, Holland), *Libri Geneseos analysis* (1604), written ca. 1594 (cited by Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 4:1220); Poole, *Synopsis criticorum*.
139. Bernardo José Aldrete, *Varias antigüedades de españa africa y otras provincias* (Amberes: A costa de Iuan Hasrey, 1614).
140. See Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 44.
141. [A]s the maidservants are daughters of Ham and thus are steeped in licentiousness, because they follow after their origin it is found an increase in their number is an increase in licentiousness, and even if they are kosher maidservants [Jewish? non-Hamitic?], in any case, multiplying maidservants . . . for maidservants, through their bad material in that they are descendants of Ham, go beyond the [proper?] order [of things?] and because of this they are licentious. (Yehuda b. Bezael Löw, *Derekh Hayyim* [Israel, 1980], 83, commentary on *Ethics of the Fathers* 2:7: "one who multiplies maidservants multiplies licentiousness, one who multiplies slaves multiplies theft.")
142. Jordan, *White Over Black*, 18; David Brion Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress*, ch. 3.
143. A. J. R. Russell-Wood, "Before Columbus: Portugal's African Prelude to the Middle Passage and Contribution to Discourse on Race and Slavery," in *Race, Discourse, and the Origin of the Americas: A New World View*, edited by Vera Lawrence and Rex Nettleford (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1995), 155.
144. Cham's eldest son C[h]ûs was born Black, ■ were all his descendants, though C[h]ûs arrived even before his father's crime. The offspring of Mezraim (= Egypt) were and are born "black, and deformed with a fetid mouth, and putrid," needing to cure it by placing salt in the mouth. The progeny of Phut are "the blackest, and these are the Moors" ("Explicação porque são os negros negros," 143).
145. Stuart B. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations in the Formation of Brazilian Society: Bahia, 1550-1835* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 163.
146. David Eltis, "Atlantic History in Global Perspective," *Itinerario* 23, no. 2 (1999): 151 (Table 1). Blackburn wrote that "the really massive importation" of slaves into Spanish

- America began only after 1595. Between then and 1640 some 268,600 slaves were officially brought over, the actual number probably far higher (Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 140).
147. As it had in medieval times for serfs, among others. See *The Mirror of Justices* (late thirteenth century?), cited in David Brion Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1966), 97-98.
148. On the basis of Roman law, many medieval jurists from all three major monotheisms ordained that the child of a slave mother inherits her slave status, while the child of a free mother inherits her free status, in both cases regardless of the father's status. Hence, without manumission, slavery continued through inheritance. On medieval Europe, see Patterson, *Slavery and Social Death*, 139-41; on the *Siete Partidas*, see Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 51; see also the general discussion in Heers, *Esclavos y servientes*, 201-4, 213-20. On Islam, see Lewis, *Race and Slavery in the Middle East*, 9-10. Some Jewish examples: *Mekhilta d'Rabi Yishmael*, masekhet d'Nezikin Mishpatim, parsha 2; Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Slaves, 7:5, 9:1,3; Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, pt. 1, responsum no. 188.
149. V. Y. Mudimbe cited the idiosyncratic example of Sepúlveda, who held that "all natives were meant to be subjugated," enslaved, and exploited (Mudimbe, "Romanus Pontifex," 61).
150. For example, between 1470 and 1525, at least 1,153 slaves were liberated by their masters in Seville, including 319 Blacks, the largest single group (Franco Silva, *Esclavitud en Andalucía*, 125). By the 1470s, Seville hosted "a few thousand African slaves" (Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 113), while by 1565, the Archbishopric of Seville as a whole had 14,670 slaves (Dominguez Ortiz, "Esclavitud en Castilla," 376; Juan de Mata Carriazo, "Negros, esclavos y extran-jeros en el barrio sevillano de san bernardo [1617-1629]," *Archivo Hispalense* 20 [1954]: 125).
151. Henry Whistler, "Extracts from Henry Whistler's Journal of the West India Expedition," in *The Narrative of General Venables, with an Appendix of Papers Relating to the Expedition to the West Indies and the Conquest of Jamaica, 1654-1655*, edited by Charles H. Firth (London, 1900), 146.
152. From Richard Ligon, "A True & Exact History of the Island of Barbados (1657)," in *Caribbeana: An Anthology of English Literature of the West Indies, 1657-1777*, edited by Thomas W. Krise (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 17.
153. David Eltis, *The Rise of African Slavery in the Americas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 61. Davis, *Problem of Slavery*, 132, pointed out the shift to a more permanent, hereditary slavery in the British colonies between 1660 and 1710, but did not connect this with the rise of interest in the curse of Ham.
154. Hugo Grotius accepted the justification of wars against those who sinned against nature and God, while John Locke understood that Black slavery rested on the right of war (Kaija Tiainen-Anttila, *The Problem of Humanity: The Blacks in the European Enlightenment* [Helsinki: Finnish Historical Society, 1994], 327; Fryer, *Staying Power*, 151). According to Roxann Wheeler, early-eighteenth-century Englishmen justified the enslavement of Africans by "their historic practice of enslaving prisoners of war," among other arguments, but she provided no examples (Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race: Categories of Difference in Eighteenth-Century British Culture* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000], 129).

155. Cited in Edwards and Walvin, *Black Personalities*, 14.
156. On the developing scientific bases for categorizing humanity, see Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 131-54; Sollors, *Neither Black Nor White*, 92-111; Braude, *Sex, Slavery, and Racism*.
157. See, for instance, Paulo Fernando de Moraes Farias, "Models of the World and Categorical Models: The 'Enslavable Barbarian' as a Mobile Classificatory Label," *Slavery and Abolition: A Journal of Comparative Studies* 1, no. 2 (September 1980): 115-31. Farias argued that descriptions of African peoples reflect fairly repetitive imaginative structures, rather than actual observation. Emily Bartels made a similar argument about the overly particular but also overly general understanding of "African" ethnicity, which was divided between a handful of known groups (Ethiopians, Moors, Egyptians, etc.) (Emily Bartels, "Making More of the Moor: Aaron, Othello, and Renaissance Refashionings of Race," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 41, no. 4 [Winter 1990]: 433-54). But one transition witnessed at similar points in each colonial development was that from classical ethnogeography to its "modern" successor. Hence, the Garamontes, Getulae, Troglodytes, etc., were at a certain point replaced by Mandigos, Senegals, etc.
158. Sources from sixteenth- and even seventeenth-century Valencia contained skin-color definitions, such as "blanco-membrillo, membrillo-moreno, membrillo-claro, moreno-claro, llor-mulato, blanca-llora, . . . oscuro . . . poco moreno . . . mulato" (Grullera Sanz, *Esclavitud en Valencia*, 125), showing that here the descriptive-administrative function remained primary, rather than that of social engineering. See also González Díaz, *Esclavitud en Ayamonte*, 53.
159. Reproduced in "Ementa dos livros de vereações da câmara do Funchal (L.º 2.º [1481-82])," *Arquivo Histórico da Madeira* 3, no. 2 (1933): 31.
160. Much of the increasing focus on heritable characteristics derived from the anti-Jewish discourse of Iberian medical science; see Diego Gracia Guillén, "Judaism, Medicine, and the Inquisitorial Mind in Sixteenth-Century Spain," in *The Spanish Inquisition and the Inquisitorial Mind*, edited by Angel Alcalá (Boulder, CO: Social Science Monographs, 1987), 375-400; David B. Ruderman, *Jewish Thought and Scientific Discovery in Early Modern Europe* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985), ch. 5 ("Converso Doctors and Race").
161. Jorge Cañizares Esquerro, "New World, New Stars: Patriotic Astrology and the Invention of Indian and Creole Bodies in Colonial Spanish America, 1600-1650," *AHR* 104, no. 1 (February 1999): 33-68.
162. Jean-Baptiste Labat, *Nouvelle relation de l'Afrique occidentale* (Paris, 1728), 2: 255; translated in Cohen, *French Encounter*, 10. See also the similar views of the Portuguese physician depicted in Louis Armand de Lorn D'Arce, *Nouveaux voyages de Mr. le Baron de Lahontan* (The Hague, 1703).
163. Sandoval, *Tratado*, 26.
164. Cited in Margaret T. Hodgen, *Early Anthropology in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964), 421-22. Hodgen saw this as a watershed, the origin of the new, "modern" paradigm: "for the first time a division of man into kinds (other than 'nations'), in place of the usual single human unit" (422). Yet the passage is thoroughly imbricated with classical discourses, such as the theory of the three or seven climes.

165. François Bernier, "Nouvelle division de la Terre, par les différentes Espèces ou Races d'hommes qui l'habitent, envoyée par un fameux Voyageur à Monsieur ***** à peu près en ces termes," *Journal des Sçavans* (1684); cited in Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 143. According to Poliakov, the essay by Bernier constituted the introduction of a new, modern mentalité regarding "race." I am tempted, as one can see, to understand the developments in terms of barely distinguishable increments.
166. Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, bk. 4, ch. 7, sec. 16, and bk. 2, ch. 25, sec. 1; cited in Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 145-46.
167. Quoted in Poliakov, *The Aryan Myth*, 175.
168. Roxann Wheeler had this shift effected "by the 1720s" (Wheeler, *Complexion of Race*, 98). Again, the history of these views is not a strictly linear progression, nor did they constitute the whole of European discourse in the eighteenth century, when a growing number of voices questioned such conceptual segregation of Blacks. See, for instance, Anthony J. Barker, *The African Link: British Attitudes to the Negro in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1550-1807* (London: Frank Cass, 1978); the monotonic "racism" of eighteenth-century British discourse was questioned and complicated throughout Wheeler, *Complexion of Race*.
169. Best, *True Discourse*, 19-20. Europeans continued to worry and theorize about such environmentally induced darkening into the eighteenth century (see the examples brought in Barker, *The African Link*, 82-84; Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, 121, n. 65, 127-29).
170. Though not all who doubted the climatological explanation for human Blackness resolved the matter by resorting to the curse of Ham. Labat, for example, denied that the curse had any connection with anyone other than the Canaanites.
171. An excellent survey of such views from English writers can be found in Barker, *The African Link*.
172. *Sefer Eldad ha-Dani* was included in the editions of *Divrei ha-Yamim shel Moshe Rabeinu* printed in Constantinople, in 1517, and Venice, in 1544 and 1605 (the first edition is unpaginated; in the latter two, the cannibals appeared on 40a and 24a, respectively).
173. Giambattista Basile, *Il pentamerone*, edited and translated by Benedetto Croce (Bari: Laterza, 1957); discussed in Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 46-47.

Chapter 7

1. This was as true for customs and notarial records as for texts describing Africans and their customs, ranging from the early European explorers of Africa to European missionaries and travelers in the Americas. See Thornton, *Africa and Africans*, 184-86.
2. Various sources reveal the discourse in transition. A 1501 decree by the Portuguese king Manuel liberating a slave referred to him as "francisco lauremço"/"black man of the land of benin" (cited in Tinhorão, *Negros em Portugal*, 76). Here "nation" stood side by side with a larger grouping by complexion. But already early on in colonial territories the importance of ethnic particularities had faded. A proposal from the first quarter of the same century for populating the island of Española spoke of bringing "negros" (Juan Bautista Muñoz, *Santo Domingo en los manuscritos de Juan Bautista Muñoz*, edited by Roberto Marte [Santo Domingo: Ediciones Fundación García Arévalo, 1981], 292-93). Spanish plays from the 1520s and 1530s already spoke of "el

30. Ya'akov b. Asher, *Arba'ah Turim*, bk. 2 (Yoreh De'ah), Laws of Slaves, no. 267.
31. Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Circumcision, 1:6. The seven Noahide commandments mark the minimal prerequisites for "civilized" behavior: to establish courts, not to kill, not to eat animals alive, etc.
32. *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Slaves, 8:12.
33. Emphasis added; Yosef Karo, *Beit Yosef*, Yoreh De'ah, no. 267:4, citing R. Avraham b. David, Laws of Forbidden Sexual Relations, 14:8.
34. R. Mordehai b. Hillel (known as ha-Mordehai), Yevamot, no. 41. My reconstruction of the history of these slave-related laws barely does justice to its complexities, if only from the aspect of manuscript variants, regional differences, and the like. Grayzel, for instance, brought another wording from ha-Mordehai, as cited in the *Shulkhan Arukh*: "and so in these lands where it is forbidden to proselytize any Gentile, we make the assumption that he had agreed with the slave not to convert him to Judaism, and he may retain him thus as long as he likes" (Grayzel, *Church and the Jews*, 24, n. 14). Of the seminal book of R. Mordehai, known as *Sefer ha-Mordehai*, it has been written that "many manuscripts are extant in libraries in many parts of the world, but no two of them are identical, and all of them are different from Mordehai ha-Gadol (the unabridged Mordehai), also extant in manuscript" (EJ 12:312). For these reasons, Rabbi Yehuda Löw of Prague (sixteenth century) ruled that the work(s) cannot be used for legal decision making.
35. Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot*, pt. 4, responsum no. 50. According to the same responsum, Radbaz cited an unnamed source holding that the twelve-month limit on holding slaves referred only to slaves who had accepted the seven Noahide commandments but not circumcision.
36. The translation here comes from Leone da Modena, *The History of the Present Jews Throughout the WORLD. Being an Ample Tho Succint Account of Their CUSTOMS, CEREMONIES, and MANNER OF LIVING, at This Time*, translated by Simon Ockley (London: Edm. Powell, 1707), 218-19; in the original edition, Leone da Modena, *Historia de gli riti hebraici*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1637), 1:206 (pt. 5, ch. 3 ["De Schavi"]). Modena's discussion here is reproduced nearly verbatim, though without attribution, by Picart, *Ceremonies of Costumes*, vol. 1 ("Historical Treatment of the Everyday Practices Used by Jews"), ch. 2.
37. For instance, in 1579, the Portuguese New Christian Antonio Saldanha told the Inquisitors in Venice, where he lived among the Portuguese New Christians, that three years earlier he had heard from "the Jew David Pas," at whose house in the Ghetto Saldanha had been a frequent houseguest, how "Portuguese New Christians, both in Portugal itself and in Venice, habitually Judaized the slaves in their own households and gave them gentle and loving treatment" (Pullan, *Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice*, 75, n. 12). Whether his testimony is as accurate as it was self-serving and purposely provocative to Christian sensitivities is difficult to know. The statement transmitted by Saldanha implies—as does the context of its double transmission—that such "gentle and loving" treatment constituted part of the wooing of slaves toward Judaism, a wooing encouraged by Jewish law, but also by a form of cultural defiance on the part of believers in this persecuted religion.
38. Essentially the same thing, as Johannes Fabian showed (Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object* [New York: Columbia University Press, 1983]). These tactics hint at some of the ways in which Modena's text reveals its status as

- a proto-anthropological text that sanitized its subject for Christian readers; see Mark R. Cohen, "Leone da Modena's Riti: A Seventeenth-Century Plea for Social Toleration of Jews," in *Essential Papers on Jewish Culture in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, edited by David B. Ruderman (New York: New York University Press, 1992), 429-73; Frank E. Manuel, *The Broken Staff: Judaism Through Christian Eyes* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1992), 77-78.
39. David Pardo, *Compendio de dinim que todo israel deve saber y observar* (Amsterdam, 1689); Yosef Karo, *Shulkhan Arukh*, facsimile of the first edition, Krakow, 1578-80 (Jerusalem: Kedem, 1974), sec. 267, Laws of Slaves. One of the first Spanish condensations of Karo's work similarly left out any mention of the commandment to circumcise slaves (Altaras, *Libro de mantenimiento de la alma*).
40. Cardoso, *Excelencias*, ch. 5.
41. Oliveyra, *Darhei ha-Shem*; Abraham Vaez, *Arbol de vidas en el qual se contienen los dinim mas necesarios que deve observar todo Ysrael* (N.p. [Amsterdam?], 1692); Franco Serrano, *Cinco libros*, section in back, *Dinim tocantes a los Preceptos siguientes*; Moshe b. Ya'akov Hagiz (1672-1751?; Jerusalem, Amsterdam), *Sefer Eleh ha-Mitzvot*; Binyamin Rafael Dias Brandon, *Orot ha-Mitzvot* (Amsterdam: Jan Janson, 1753); Avraham Gabay Yzidro, *Yad Avraham. ve-Hu Hibur ha-Azharot* (Amsterdam: Leib b. Moshe Zusmans/Jan Janson, 1758); Selomoh Levy Maduro, *Brit Yitshak* (Amsterdam: Gerard Johann Janson/House of Mondui, 1768).
42. David Pardo served as the *hazan* of the Portuguese congregation in London. The bibliographers do not agree on whether he composed the *Compendio de Dinim* or merely translated it into Spanish from the Hebrew version, *Shulkhan Tahor*, written by his father Joseph Pardo (d. 1677), also *hazan* of the same congregation. Cardoso (b. 1604), lived in Spain until the age of 44, when he left for Venice. De Oliveyra (d. 1658), Serrano, and Dias Brandon all grew up and lived within the Amsterdam Sephardic community. Hagiz had Vaez was rabbi of the Portuguese congregation Nefuzot Yehuda in Bayonne. Hagiz had come to Amsterdam several years prior to the publication of *Eleh ha-Mitzvot*. Gabay Yzidro studied at Ets Haim in Amsterdam and served as rabbi in Surinam and rabbi in Barbados. Levy Maduro lived in Curaçao. On the two last figures, see Chapters 9 and 10.
43. Menasseh Ben Israel, *Thesouro Dos Dinim Ultima Parte Na Qual Fe Cõtem Todos Os Preceitos, Ritos e Cerimonias q Tocaõ a Hua Perfeyta Economica Dedicada a Os Muy Nobres e Magnificos Senhores Abraha, e Ishak Israel Pereyra* (Amsterdam, 1647). Another rabbi who assumed the circumcision of male slaves was Athias, *Thesoro de preceptos*, 67a (positive commandment 235). But his comments, cited in Chapter 2, greatly complicated the import of having undergone this ritual.
44. Compare with the continuing treatment of circumcision for slaves in eastern Mediterranean Sephardic discourse, as discussed in Chapter 3. The famous midrashic anthology ranean Sephardic discourse, as discussed in Chapter 3. The famous midrashic anthology of R. Ya'akov Huli discussed the topic in several paragraphs when glossing Gen. 17:12 and even provided the blessings to be said, hardly a purely speculative commentary (Ya'akov Huli, *Me'am Lo'ez. Bereshit* [Constantinople, 1730], ad loc; excerpted in Elena Romero, *El libro del buen retajar: textos judeoespañoles de circuncisión* [Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1998], 154-56). David Sh'muel b. Ya'akov Pardo (1718-1790; Venice, Sarajevo, Jerusalem) wrote that a male slave could not be held longer than twelve months without being circumcised (David Sh'muel b. Ya'akov

- Pardo, *Maskil le-David: Biurim al Perush Rashi she-al ha-Torah* [Venice, 1761], ad loc. Exod. 23:12).
45. Translated in Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 61.
 46. The *parnasim* of the Hamburg Sephardic community promulgated a nearly identical ordinance around the same time (Yosef Kaplan, "The Place of the Herem in the Sephardic [sic] Community of Hamburg During the Seventeenth Century," in *Die Sefarden in Hamburg: Zur Geschichte einer Minderheit*, 2 vols., edited by Michael Studemund-Halévy and Peter Koj [Hamburg: Helmut Buske Verlag, 1994], 1:73).
 47. Ralph Melnick, *From Polemics to Apologetics: Jewish-Christian Rapprochement in 17th Century Amsterdam* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1981), 15. The two pertinent *ascamot* appeared in Mendes dos Remedios, *Judeus portugueses em amsterdam*, 195. Clearly, according to the authors of these communal regulations, the circumcision of slaves failed to qualify as a "law" or "obligation." According to Arnold Wiznitzer, Mendes dos Remedios made numerous mistakes in his excerpts from the manuscripts (Wiznitzer, "Merger Agreement," 112). The relevant passages can be found in English in Wiznitzer, *ibid.*, 124, 132.
 48. Unlike laws passed in 1380 by the Cortes of Castile forbidding Jews to circumcise their Muslim or Tartar slaves (Yitzhak Baer, *History of the Jews in Christian Spain*, 1:376). Silvia Marzagalli noted in passing that French Jesuits protested in the 1670s and 1680s about the problem of Jews owning nominally Catholic slaves in the colonies belonging to the "very Christian" king of France; see her "Atlantic Trade and Sephardim [sic] Merchants in Eighteenth-Century France: The Case of Bordeaux," in Bernardini and Fiering, *Jews and the Expansion of Europe*, 274. In 1681, the pro-Jesuit Governor of Martinique submitted a petition to the minister Colbert accusing the local Jews of owning Christian slaves and of killing the latter's babies in order to avoid having to baptize them (Mordechai Arbell, "Jewish Settlements in the French Colonies in the Caribbean [Martinique, Guadeloupe, Haiti, Cayenne] and the 'Black Code,'" in Bernardini and Fiering, *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West*, 294). The Jesuits were instrumental in the promulgation of the 1685 *Code Noir*, which expelled Jews from the French colonies. But note that the issue always revolved around *Christian* slaves.
 49. Israel, "Dutch Sephardic Colonization," 106.
 50. *Haskamah* 32 [dated 5409/1649], translated in Wiznitzer, *Records*, 69.
 51. See, for instance, Shlomo b. Avraham ha-Cohen (sixteenth century; Greece), who ruled that "[i]t is permitted to a person to sell to a Jew a maidservant who immersed for the sake of enslavement" (cited in Moshe b. Ya'akov Hagiz, *Sefer Leket ha-Kemah* [Amsterdam: Salomo b. Joseph Proops, 1707], 94b). Obviously this ruling held only for sale to a Jewish master.
 52. *Libro de los Acuerdos*, 11.
 53. Though conversions of Christians to Judaism happened infrequently, they happened. Some examples of Calvinist converts in the seventeenth-century Netherlands were brought by Yosef Kaplan, "Political Concepts in the World of the Portuguese Jews of Amsterdam During the Seventeenth Century: The Problem of Exclusion and the Boundaries of Self-Identity," in *Menasseh Ben Israel and His World*, edited by Yosef Kaplan, Henry Méchoulan, and Richard H. Popkin (Leiden: E.-J. Brill, 1989), 56. According to Albert M. Hyamson, two lists of names from 1660 delineated the London Jewish community of that time. Four converts populated the lists, including two who had

- been associated through business with the merchant Antonio Fernandez (or Abraham Israel) Carvajal (Hyamson, *Sephardim*, 22). Nonetheless, "it is certain that the synagogue authorities as a rule refused to accept proselytes." The language of a 1678 ordinance confessed that such an attitude "is wholly directed to our preservation and in order to fulfil what we are recommended by His Majesty" (66), that is, not to make proselytes. On whether or not the Jews were readmitted to England on condition that they not proselytize, Hyamson's language was elliptical: "There was a longstanding tradition, if nothing more, that, when the conditions on which the presence of Jews in England was to be tolerated were under consideration, an undertaking had been given that the Jews would refrain from making or attempting to make converts from among the Christian population" (65).
54. Hyamson, *Sephardim*, 45. He referred to an *ascama* of 15 Tevet 5431 (1671).
 55. Peter Buijs, "Circumcision Registers as Historical Sources," *SR* 33, no. 1 (1999): 67-71, provided a general but unfortunately limited introduction.
 56. "Livro dos acordos da Nação e *ascamot*," fol. 74a, 8 Sh'vat 5423 (1663), GAA 334, No. 19 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1518, no pagination; "Livro de Memorias donde se deixa notisia de algunas couzas q pasam diante do SS^{ra} do Mahamad," GAA 334, No. 25, fol. 3 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1524. The latter entry appears, perhaps significantly, only in Hebrew.
 57. "Copia do livro das circuncisões feitos por o senhor nosso pay Mosseh Abrabanel que Dios tem expetando os Tedescos, cujo livro esta em poder de nos Joseph e Jacob de Mosseh Abrabanel seus filhos, 1693-1725," GAA 334, No. 377 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1712.
 58. Including the register of *mohel* Mosseh Abrabanel cited in note 57. Neither the book of Selomoh Curiel Abas (1708-27) or David Bueno de Mesquita and his sons (1725-31) contained such mentions, though one *manzer* and several *tudescos*, or German Jews, appeared ("Notisias de los circunsidadores do jaguidim deste Kahal Kados," GAA 334, No. 378 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1713). The published burial records did make mention of uncircumcised Conversos, such as the 12-year-old "son of Lobatto" buried in November 1617 ("hũ filho do Lobato de 12 anos incircunciso en vida e o puzerão junto a arvore mais grossa das chegadas"; Pieterse, *Livro de Bet Haim*, 91).
 59. My emphasis; Koen et al., "Notarial Records," *SR* 6, no. 1 (January 1972): 115, n. 51.
 60. Richard D. Barnett, ed., *The Circumcision Register of Isaac and Abraham de Paiba (1715-1775) from the Manuscript Record Preserved in the Archives of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation of London Named Sahar Asamam (ספר השמים)*, Together with a Supplement Including A Record of Circumcisions 1679-99, Marriages 1679-89 and Some Female Births 1679-99 Compiled by Miriam Rodrigues-Pereira, vol. 4 of *Bevis Marks Records* (London: Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation/Jewish Historical Society of England, 1991).
 61. *Ibid.*, 144.
 62. That some English Jews owned (employed?) Blacks during this period can be assumed from the fact that on 29 September 1692, passes for travel to the West Indies were given to "Joshua Salvador, Isaac Pachecho, Abraham Excixa, and two negroes" (Israel Abrahams, "Passes Issued to Jews in the Period 1689 to 1696," *TJHSE, Miscellanies* [1925]: xxiv-xxxiii).
 63. Miriam Bodian, "'Men of the Nation': The Shaping of Converso Identity in Early Modern Europe," *Past and Present*, no. 143 (May 1994): 97-98.

64. Mortera, *Tratado*, 899; see also the comments of Isaac Orobio de Castro quoted in Yosef Kaplan, "Political Concepts," 56.
65. Bodian, "Men of the Nation," 112.
66. David Berger, *The Jewish-Christian Debate in the High Middle Ages: A Critical Edition of the NIZZAHON VETUS with an Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1979), 159 (Hebrew section).
67. Judah Rosenthal, ed., *Sepher Joseph Hamekane* (Jerusalem: Mekize Nirdamim, 1970), 95 (on Malachi 2:9).
68. Amos Funkenstein thought as much (personal communication, March 1995).
69. Cited in Stephanie Cain Van D'Elden, "Black and White: Contact with the Mediterranean World in Medieval German Narrative," in *The Medieval Mediterranean: Cross-Cultural Contacts*, edited by Marilyn J. Chiat and Kathryn L. Reyerson, *Medieval Studies at Minnesota*, 3 (St. Cloud, MN: North Star Press of St. Cloud, 1988), 112.
70. Cited in Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, *Assimilation and Racial Anti-Semitism: The Iberian and German Models*, Leo Baeck Memorial Lecture, 26 (New York: Leo Baeck Institute, 1982), 6-7.
71. Sir William Brereton, *Travels in Holland, the United Provinces, England, Scotland, and Ireland, 1634-1635* ([London]: Printed for the Chetham Society, 1844), 61.
72. Isaac de la Peyrère, *Du Rappel des Juifs* (Paris: n. p., 1643), 81. I thank Guillaume Aubert for alerting me to this reference.
73. Printed in Appendix 1 in Wilfred S. Samuel, "The First London Synagogue of the Resettlement," *TJHSE* 10 (1921/23): 51; and in Hyamson, *Sephardim*, 16.
74. Wilfred S. Samuel, "First London Synagogue," 56; Hyamson, *Sephardim*, 19.
75. Cited in Lionel D. Barnett, ed., *A History of the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation*, vol. 1 of *Bevis Marks Records* (London: Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Congregation/Jewish Historical Society of England, 1940), 53; Hyamson, *Sephardim*, 73. Barnett took the second half of the sentence to mean that the Jews spoke with a strong foreign accent.
76. Leo Hershkowitz, *Wills of Early New York Jews (1704-1799)*, *Studies in American Jewish History*, 4 (New York: American Jewish Historical Society, 1967), 36.
77. Cited in Hershkowitz, *Wills*, 38, n. 12. Hershkowitz cited R. Alonzo Brock, "Journal of William Black, 1744," *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography*, 1 (1877): 415-16.
78. E.J. *Some Considerations on the Naturalization of the Jews* (London, 1753), 4; quoted in Holly Snyder, "A Sense of Place: Jews, Identity and Social Status in Colonial British America, 1654-1831" (Ph.D. diss., Brandeis University, 2000), 112, n. 29.
79. Philip Wright, ed., *Lady [Maria] Nugent's Journal of Her Residence in Jamaica from 1801 to 1805* (Kingston: Institute of Jamaica, 1966), 148.
80. François-Maximilien Mission, *A New Voyage to Italy* (London, 1714), 2:139; cited by Sander Gilman, *The Visibility of the Jew in the Diaspora: Body Imagery and Its Cultural Context*, B. G. Rudolph Lecture in Judaic Studies, Syracuse University, 1991 (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1992), 3.
81. Samuel Stanhope Smith, *An Essay on the Causes of the Variety of Complexion and Figure in the Human Species* (Philadelphia, 1787), 35.
82. Lucien Wolf, *Jews in the Canary Islands: Being a Calendar of Jewish Cases Extracted from the Records of the Canariote Inquisition in the Collection of the Marquess of Bute, Translated from the Spanish and Edited with an Introduction and Notes* (London: The Jewish Historical

- Society of England/Spottiswoode, Ballantyne & Co., 1926), 84, n. 1, dated the book to 1648. A sly Jewish retort of the sentiment might be R. Leone da Modena's poem "A Christian who becomes blackened," a praise poem with a seeming undercutting of Christian Whiteness: "A Christian who becomes blackened by greatness of sin/the time comes for the waters of confession to whiten the eye . . ." (Leo de Modena, *Divan*, 99 [no. 51]).
83. Carlos Esteban Deive, *Heterodoxia e inquisición en Santo Domingo, 1492-1822* (Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Portada Taller, 1983), 23, n. 10. Elias Lipiner printed a slightly different version: "Por marran' nã defamo/nossa fee muy infiees,/bautyzados,/que na ley velha samarram/dos negros abrauanees/dotrynados" (Lipiner, *Tivo Portuguese Exiles*, 101-3). See also the poem attacking the Jewish lineage of the poet Rodrigo Cota (quoted in Francisco Cantera Burgos, *El poeta Ruy Sánchez Cota (Rodrigo Cota) y su familia de judíos conversos* [Madrid: Universidad de Madrid, 1970], 134).
84. Cited in Elias Lipiner, *Izaque de Castro: o mancebo que veio preso do Brasil* [Recife: Fundação Joaquim Nabuco/Editora Massangana, 1992], 103). Already in the first decade of the century, Fray Prudencio de Sandoval had voiced the same sentiment; see Yerushalmi, *Assimilation and Racial Anti-Semitism*, 16. The interpretation of Jer. 13:23 as referring to the Jews derives from Nicholas de Lyra, *Postilla literalis super Biblia*: The Jews "were not able to revert to good on account of an inclination to evil, since [this] inclination is [their] particular nature" (cited in Jeremy Cohen, *The Friars and the Jews: The Evolution of Medieval Anti-Judaism* [Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1982], 178).
85. Tubal probably referred to Tuval-Kayin (Gen. 4:22), whose originating of metalworking signified for some biblical commentators and no doubt Shakespeare and his audience the manufacture of weaponry as well, hence, an originary Asiatic violence.
86. Johannes Leo Africanus, *A Geographical Historie of Africa*, translated and edited by John Pory (London, 1600), 41; cited in Hall, *Things of Darkness*, 39.
87. Ludovico Ariosto, *The Comedies of Ariosto*, translated and edited by Edmond M. Beame and Leonard G. Sbrocchi (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 116 (Act 2, Scene 1).
88. Richard Webster made the excellent suggestion that Ariosto's characterization quite possibly alluded to the "messianic pretender" and self-proclaimed Lost Tribesman David ha-Reuveni. Al-Hassan ibn Muhammad al-Wazzani/Leo Africanus provided us the flip side of this "passing" in the Mediterranean: "For mine owne part, when I heare the Africans evile spoken of, I wile affirme my selfe to be one of Granada, and when I perceive the nation of Granada to be discommended, then will I professe my selfe to be an African" (Leo Africanus, *History and Description of Africa*, 1:190; cited in Bovill, *Golden Trade*, 143).
89. *Journals of the Assembly of Jamaica* ([Kingston]: Alexander Aikman, 1821), 4:246; cited in Snyder, "Sense of Place," 111-12.
90. A 1765 legislative act from the colony of Georgia put forth a similar categorization of Jews when noting that native Americans were "to be esteemed as being precisely upon the same footing with Mulatoes or Meztizoes (or Jews or Turks) actually naturalized by a special act of Assembly." The language here came from an anonymous 1784 pamphlet, *A Citizen, Cursory Remarks on Men and Measures in Georgia* ([Savannah], 1784), 24. On this pamphlet, see Snyder, "Sense of Place," 130-33.

91. David R. Roediger, *Towards the Abolition of Whiteness: Essays on Race, Politics, and Working Class History* (London: Verso, 1994), 184-87.
92. Autoethnographic texts, wrote Mary Louise Pratt, are not "what are usually thought of as 'authentic' or autochthonous forms of self-representation," but rather involve "partial collaboration with and appropriation of the idioms of the conqueror." Often, "the idioms appropriated and transformed are those of travel and exploration writing, merged or infiltrated to varying degrees with indigenous modes" (Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* [London/New York: Routledge, 1992], 7).
93. Cited in Rosenthal, *Sepher Joseph Hamekane*, 95, n.1, from "The Book of Disputation and Answer to the Heretics," MS Oppenheim 757; Neubauer Catalog, no. 2289(6), pp. 50-51.
94. See the commentaries of Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Radak, Yosef Kaspi, and Abravanel. Isaiah 52:14-15: "Just as the many were appalled at him - So marred was his appearance, unlike that of man, His form, beyond human semblance - Just so he shall startle many nations." I thank Willis Johnson for informing me of this topos.
95. Reproduced in M. E. Hartum and A. David, "Rabbi Ovadia Yoreh of Bertinoro and His Letters from the Land of Israel" [Hebrew], in *Jews in Italy: Studies Dedicated to the Memory of U. Cassuto on the 100th Anniversary of His Birth*, edited by H. Beinart (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Hebrew University, 1988), 92; a slightly different version appeared in Abraham Neubauer, "Matters Regarding the Ten Tribes," *Kovets al-Yad* (1888), 23.
96. Hartum and David, "Letters of Ovadia of Bertinoro," 246.
97. Neubauer, "Matters Regarding the Ten Tribes," 29.
98. Ibid. One Converso interrogated in Antwerp in 1532 regarding ha-Reuveni described him as "petit noir" (cited in Andrée Aelion Brooks, *The Woman Who Defied Kings: The Life and Times of Doña Gracia Nasi - a Jewish Leader During the Renaissance* [St. Paul, MN: Paragon House, 2002], 42, 488, n. 39).
99. Brackman, "Ebb and Flow," 113-14 Brackman here followed the findings of Gerald Friedlander (*Pirke de Rabbi Eliezer [The Chapters of Rabbi Eliezer the Great] According to the Text of the Manuscript Belonging to Abraham Epstein of Vienna*, translated and edited by Gerald Friedlander [New York: B. Blom, 1971]).
100. Berger, *Nizzahon Vetus*, 159 (Hebrew section).
101. See, for instance, Daniel Boyarin, *Sephardi Speculation: A Study in Methods of Talmudic Interpretation* [Hebrew] (Jerusalem: Ben Zvi Institute/Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1989), 1 and passim.
102. See Richard H. Popkin, "Jewish Christians and Christian Jews in Spain, 1492 and After," *Judaism* 41 (1992): 248-67; Elias Lipiner, *O Sapateiro de Trancoso e o alfaiate de Setúbal* (Rio de Janeiro: Imago Editora, 1993), and idem, *Gonçalo Anes Bandarra e os cristãos-novos* (Trancoso: Câmara Municipal de Trancoso/Associação Portuguesa de Estudos Judaicos, 1996).
103. Yosef Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism: The Story of Isaac Orobio de Castro* (Oxford: Oxford University Press/The Littman Library, 1989); Yerushalmi, *Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*; Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 94; Benardete, *Hispanic Culture and Character of the Sephardic Jews*.
104. On both, see the section called "On the Importance of Being Iberian," in Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 85-95; Yosef Kaplan, "The Self-Definition of the

- Sephardic Jews of Western Europe and Their Relation to the Alien and the Stranger," in *Crisis and Creativity in the Sephardic World, 1391-1648*, edited by Benjamin R. Gampel (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997). Some Marranos, such as the De Pintos and De Castros, members of whose families returned to Judaism in Amsterdam and Curaçao, received upon their baptism not only the names of their noble godfathers but also their coats of arms and heraldries (Lindo, *History*, 155).
105. Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 93; see also Gutwirth, "Widows." S. W. Baron cited the following anecdote expressing the importance of being Iberian: When, after the resumption of hostilities between Spain and the Netherlands in 1621, a Sephardic Jew participating in a Dutch attack set fire to a Spanish ship, the Amsterdam Jewish poet Daniel Levi (Miguel) de Barrios, himself a former Spanish army officer, castigated him: "Much as he may feel rejected by his native country, no Spanish-born Hebrew should commit such an outrage against his fatherland" (Baron, *Social and Religious History*, 15:20)!
 106. Capsali, *Seder Eliahu Zuta*, 1:174-75.
 107. *Shevet Yehuda*, translated in Funkenstein, *Perceptions*, 213.
 108. Katz, David S., *Jews in England*, 188. French travelers repeatedly remarked on Jewish physical difference. Nicolas Audeber stated that "no matter what, no matter where, Jews are almost always recognizable by their sheer physical features." Another author noted that "for reasons of race [Jews] all have a face that is different from that of Christians." Other examples abound. See Nicolas Audeber, *Le Voyage et observations de plusieurs choses qui se peuvent remarquer en Italie* (Paris: G. Clouzier, 1656), 127; M. Thévenot, *Relation d'un voyage fait en Levant* (Paris: Jacques Langleis, 1664), 159.
 109. Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 63. Dealing mostly with the eighteenth century, Holly Snyder argued cogently that for the English,

[a]rguments which identified the rights of Jews with those of Indians and mulattoes were thus used to cast Jews in the same marginal and ambiguous position occupied by these groups in British America - neither fully entitled to the rights of Englishmen, nor entirely lacking in legal standing like the slave . . . Though their actual impact on policy in British America was slight, racial arguments nevertheless underscored a particular English discomfort with the Jewish presence in the overseas empire.

(Snyder, "Sense of Place," 137.)

110. Cardoso, *Excelencias*, iii.
111. Wrote Cardoso in a direct (but unwitting?) parallel with the earlier medieval explanation of Jewish Whiteness cited earlier in this chapter, those who failed to keep nations of Jewish Whiteness cited earlier in this chapter, those who failed to keep the laws of sexual purity and kashrut, "these hypocrites are similar to swans, which are whiter than white on the outside, with their feathers the equivalent of snow, while on the inside they have flesh that is black, greasy and tasteless" (Cardoso, *Excelencias*, 39). Cardoso's statement must reflect a literary topos perhaps referring to Jews, as found already in the medieval French *La Quest del Saint Graal*: "A swan is white on the outside and black inside. It is [a figure of] the hypocrite, who is yellow and pale and seems to one who sees the outside the servant of Jesus Christ, while inside it is so black and so horrible with filth and with sin that it badly fools the world" (cited in E. Ann Matter, *The Voice of My Beloved: The Song of Songs in Western Medieval Christianity* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990], 183).

112. Richard Konezke, *Colección de documentos para la historia de la formación social de Hispanoamérica, 1493-1810*, 5 vols. (Madrid: Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas, 1953-62), 1:237; cited in Frederick P. Bowser, *The African Slave in Colonial Peru, 1524-1650* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1974), 27.
113. John Francis Gemelli Careri, "A Voyage Round the World," in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels, Some Now First Printed from Original Manuscripts. Others Translated Out of Foreign Languages, and Now First Publish'd in English*, 4 vols., edited by Awnsham and John Churchill (London: H. C. at the Black Swan in Pater-noster-Row, 1704), 4: 554.
114. Cited in David S. Katz, *Philo-Semitism and the Readmission of the Jews to England, 1603-1655* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982), 168. Seventeenth-century French travelers frequently linked Jewish darkness with Jewish "depravity" and their exiled condition.
115. Lancelot Addison, *The Present State of the Jews: More Particularly Relating to Those in Barbary* (London: William Crooke, 1675), 11.
116. Menasseh Ben Israel, *Esperanza de israel* (Amsterdam, 1650), 118. This litany came nearly verbatim out of Garcia, *Origen de los indios*, 100 (bk. 3, ch. 4).
117. Salinas y Córdova, *Memorial*, 11. Some of these tropes had long pedigrees. Already in the fifteenth century one Converso writer, Alonso de Cartagena, had noted that "[s]o great and notorious is the timidity of the faithless Israelites, that whenever we want to describe excessive timidity we call it 'jewishness' [iudeitas], and we call an excessively frightened man, a 'Jew'" (translated in Bruce Rosenstock, "Alonso de Cartagena: Nation, Miscegenation, and the Jew in Late Medieval Castile," *Exemplaria* 12, no. 1 [Spring 2000]: 200-01).
118. Cardoso, *Excelencias*, 5. Perhaps trumping the denigrating connection of Jews and American Indians, Cardoso asserted that the Jews descended from the ancient Indian gymnosophists (Cardoso, *Excelencias*, 17; cited in Barrios, *Triunpho*, 56).
119. Barrios, *ibid.*, 48, 54-58.
120. Possevino, *Bibliotheca*, bk. 15, ch. 19.
121. Aldrete, *Varias antigüedades*, 165.
122. Borst, *Turmbau von Babel*, 2:406.
123. See, for example, Enrique Cornelio Agrippa, *Historia de las cosas de Etiopía* (Toledo, 1528) and Manuel Almeida (1580-1646), *Historia de Etiopía*, the latter not published in its entirety.
124. See, for example, Pablo Jauralde Pou, "Imagen y conciencia del cuerpo en la poesía española del siglo XVI," in *Le Corps dans la Société Espagnole des XVIe et XVIIe Siècles: Colloque International (Sorbonne, 5-8 octobre 1988)*, edited by Augustin Redondo (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1990), 224-25.
125. Possevino, *Bibliotheca*; Ganebrard, *Chronographiae*; and Fernandes Brandão, *Dialogues of the Great Things of Brazil*, 92 (Dialogue 2), cited in Chapters 5 and 6.
126. Timothy Oelman, ed., *Marrano Poets of the Seventeenth Century* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1982), 150-51 (La culpa del primer peregrino / The Sin of the First Pilgrim, 1).
127. Oelman, *Marrano Poets*, 125-27.
128. Abraham Pereyra, *La Certeza del camino* (Amsterdam: David de Castro Tartaz, 1666), 106.
129. *Ibid.*, 133.

130. See Zarita Nahón, *Romances judeo-españoles de tanger*, Recogidos por Zarita Nahón. Edición crítica y anotada por Samuel G. Armistead y Joseph H. Silverman. Con la colaboración de Oro Anahory Librowicz. Transcripciones musicales de Israel J. Katz (Madrid: Cátedra-Seminario Menéndez Pidal, 1977), 69 (Song 13). According to the *Cancionero de romances*, reprint of Anvers, 1550 ed., edited by A. Rodríguez-Moñino (Madrid, 1967), 271: "yo te matare Lucrecia, con vn negro de tu casa/y desde muerto lo tenga, echar lo he en la tu cama/yo dire por toda Roma, que ambos juntos os tomara."
131. Samuel G. Armistead and Joseph H. Silverman, eds., *Judeo-Spanish Ballads from Bosnia*, With the collaboration of Biljana Šljivić-Šimšić (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1971), 57 (Song B18).
132. Cited in *ibid.*, 99.
133. Helder Macedo, "A Sixteenth Century Portuguese Novel and the Jewish Press in Ferrara," *European Judaism* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2000): 55.
134. In a fascinating study, Luce López-Baralt showed that Moriscos themselves admired and aspired to White norms of physical beauty, "blond Gothic fantasies / rubias fantasías godas" (Luce López-Baralt, "La estética del cuerpo entre los moriscos del siglo XVI, o de cómo la minoría perseguida pierde su rostro," in *Le Corps dans la Société Espagnole des XVIe et XVIIe Siècles: Colloque International (Sorbonne, 5-8 octobre 1988)*, edited by Augustin Redondo [Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1990], 335-48 [quotation is from 348], and her comments in the Discussion, 351-52).
135. Cited in Alida C. Metcalf, "Millenarian Slaves? The Santidade de Jaguaripe and Slave Resistance in the Americas," *AHR* 104, no. 5 (December 1999): 1531. The same informant described how they created a riot and a general uprising "against the whites" (Metcalf, "Millenarian Slaves," 1551). In a 1613 letter, Philip II of Spain, then ruler of Portugal as well, complained about the "many uprisings of Indians and deaths of white people and runaways of slaves from the plantations" (Metcalf, "Millenarian Slaves," 1553). Notice the asymmetrical application of color for identity in these examples, which all sought to highlight the threat to Europeans.
136. Schwartz, *Sugar Plantations*, 275.
137. The not-insignificant sum, 2,702 guilders and change, was owed for a large shipment of rye. See Koen et al., "Notarial Records," *SR* 5, no. 1 (January 1971): 117-18 (doc. 393). Nunes had "said before that he would pay cash," yet on the date of the notary's action, the notary noted that the banks "will be closed for a few days." Perhaps this served as a purposefully evasive action on Nunes's part. One previous notarial record relating to Manuel Nunes dates from 1606, a draft of a deed concerning merchandise freighted in Bahia and consigned to Nunes or a partner in Madeira (Koen et al., "Notarial Records," *SR* 4, no. 1 [January 1970]: 119 [doc. 245]). Another deed shows that he received consignment of a shipment of sugar from Brazil.
138. That they were all fellow Sephardim comes across easily enough from their names: Afonso Rodrigues Cardoso, Diogo de Pina, Bento Osorio, James Lopes da Costa, Duarte Esteves de Pina, and Diogo Gonçalves de Lima (Koen et al., "Notarial Records," *SR* 5, no. 1 [January 1971]: 124 [doc. 419]). While other notarial deeds explicitly mentioned that the declarer appeared at someone else's behest, the same seems likely here.
139. GAA Notarial Archive 62, fol. 194^v.

140. He appears in Aldelkader Modena and Edgardo Morpurgo, *Medici e chirurghi ebrei dottorati e licenziati nell'università di Padova dal 1617 al 1816* (Bologna: Forni Editore, 1967), 41. Otherwise, I could find no documentation regarding this man.
141. This is not meant to minimize the difficulties Jews often had in entering and practicing medicine.
142. Morteira, *Providencia de Dios*, 28 (ch. 11).
143. Berehya Baruh [b. Yitshak Izak Shapira], *Zera Baruh*, 1st drush on Lekh L'kha.

Chapter 8

1. On the 20th of Tamuz the gentlemen Deputies were convened in the house of Señor Benjamin Israel, . . . and of common accord institute the following *Haskamot* [ordinances]. First, that no black or mulatto will be able to be buried in the cemetery except for those who had buried in it a Jewish mother; . . . And further . . . that none shall persuade any of the said blacks and mulattos, man or woman, or any other person who is not of the nation of Israel to be made Jews; and it is particularly recommended to all men of Law that they not admit them, just as people who have a [private] *mikve* [ritual bath] not immerse them without the permission of the members of the *Mahamad*, for in this way . . . results only scandal and offense to God; he who does the contrary, measures will be taken against him as disobedient.
(Libro dos termos da ymposta da nação, principiado em 24 de Sebat 5382, 20 Tamuz 5387 [1627], GAA 334, No. 13, fol. 42 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1512, no pagination.) A slightly different Portuguese text was reproduced in Wolff and Wolff, *Judeus e seus escravos*, 16.
2. Van den Boogaart, "Colour Prejudice," 45, n. 37; Faber, *Slavery and the Jews*, 16, citing Johannes Menne Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1600-1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 10.
3. Robert Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment: Surinam in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century* (Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1991), 161.
4. Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot mi-K"Y*, pt. 2, responsum no. 651.
5. For example, a 1557 Inquisition case from Mexico dealt with a Spanish woman and Indian man "for having buried in the atrium of the church an Indian who was not baptized" (Alfonso Toro, ed., *Los Judíos en la Nueva España: documentos del siglo xvi correspondientes al ramo de inquisición*, 2ª edición [Mexico City: Archivo General de la Nación/Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1982], 123 [doc. 4]).
6. Saunders, *Black Slaves and Freedmen*, 110.
7. Mata Carriazo, "Negros, esclavos y extranjeros," 125.
8. Pike, *Aristocrats and Traders*, 180.
9. See P. Urueta y José, comp., *Documentos inéditos para la historia de Cartagena*, 7 vols. (Cartagena: Tipografía de Antonio Araújo L., 1887-94), 2:94 (doc. 193).
10. Jean Baptiste du Tertre, *Histoire generale des antilles habitées par les Français*, 4 vols. (Paris: T. Jolly, 1667-71), 2:36.
11. "Code noir: ou, Edit servant de règlement pour le gouvernement et l'administration de la justice et de la police des îles françoises de l'Amérique et pour la discipline et le commerce des negres et esclaves dans ledit pays. Du mois de mars 1685," in *Loix et constitutions des colonies françoises de l'Amérique sous le vent*, 2 vols., edited by Moreau de Saint-Méry (Paris, 1784-90), 1:414-24. Unbaptized slaves were to be buried at night.

12. Translated in Wolf, *Jews in the Canary Islands*, 24. Fernando was the Black slave, the New Christian Alvaro Gonçalves of the city of La Palma his master.
13. Reprinted in Victor Ribeiro, *A Santa casa da misericórdia de Lisboa (subsídios para a sua história)*, 1498-1898 (Lisbon: Typographia da Academia Real das Sciencias, 1902), 183. A somewhat different version can be found in Ed. Freire de Oliveira, *Elementos para a história do município de Lisboa* (Lisbon, 1885), 1:509.
14. Saunders, *Black Slaves and Freedmen*, 110; Ribeiro, *Santa casa*, 183. Poço = a well or mineshaft.
15. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*, 42.
16. José Luis Saez, *La Iglesia y el negro esclavo en Santo Domingo: Una historia de tres siglos* (Santo Domingo: Patronato de la Ciudad Colonial de Santo Domingo, 1994), 41.
17. Frederick P. Bowser, "The Free Person of Color in Mexico City and Lima: Manumission and Opportunity, 1580-1650," in *Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative Studies*, edited by Stanley Engerman and Eugene D. Genovese (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 354. Despite one objection to the latter rule, Bowser found "no evidence that the decision was reversed."
18. Allison Blakely, *Blacks in the Dutch World: The Evolution of Racial Imagery in a Modern Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993), 226.
19. Joyce Hansen and Gary McGowan, *Breaking Ground, Breaking Silence: The Story of New York's African Burial Ground* (New York: Henry Holt, 1998), 27.
20. Hansen and McGowan, *Breaking Ground*, 33.
21. Puckrein, *Little England*, 23.
22. Swetschinski, "Portuguese Jewish Merchants," 384.
23. Admonishment which was read from the *tevah* [central raised platform in the synagogue] the [concerning] the opening of the doors of the synagogue in the morning [and concerning] the seating of the mulattas and black women + regarding the Ashkenazi women [servants]. The Gentlemen of the Mahamad . . . that the doors of the House [synagogue] to the women's section will not be opened before 6 in the morning . . . so that they [the women] will not be on the street, which is to be followed without fail, also they enact that they [the mistresses] not send mulatta girls, nor Blacks, to take [i.e., reserve] a seat before they arrive, because those when they arrive will be seated in the 8th pew and behind, and [those] doing the contrary will be ordered thrown out and the same [person] will be harassed like the *nudescas* [sending?] all of them to their [own] synagogue.
(Livro dos acordos, [undated (1640)], GAA 334, No. 19 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1518, fol. 165.)
24. "The Gentlemen of the Mahamad for just considerations order . . . adding [that] no circumcised Black Jew should be called to the sepher torah nor should any mitsvah of the kind given out through lotteries of the Congregation be given to him . . . because such befits the reputation of the Congregation and good governance. Done on 20 Sivan" (Livros dos Acordos, GAA, PA 334, No. 19, fol. 173 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1518, fol. 258; also cited in Yosef Kaplan, "Political Concepts," 58-59).
25. B. N. Teensma, "The Brazilian Letters of Vicent Joachim Soler," in *Dutch Brazil*, Vol. 1: *Documents in the Leiden University Library* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Index, 1997), 61.
26. On the 24th of Nisan the Gentlemen of the Mahamad were convened and Resolved that from this day forward a separated place will be made in the Oudherkercke cemetery for all the black and mulatto Jews to be buried [there], except those who were born in Judaism, [their parents] having [been married] with *quedolim* [with *kiddushin*, i.e., properly, according to Jewish law], or

those who were married to whites with *quedolim*, for all these [exceptions] will be buried in an ordinary row, which [action] was taken with the counsel of the Gentlemen *Hahanim* [scholars] of this Holy Congregation, and a note will be given to the administrator of the cemetery in order that things be managed according to this [resolution].

(Livro dos Acordos, 24 Nisan 5407 [1647], GAA 334, No. 19, fol. 224 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1518, no pagination; cited also in Yosef Kaplan, "Political Concepts," 58-59.)

27. "24 Sebat 5410 [1650]/Renewal of the *escama* of 1639 [?] which treats the circumcizing of *goyim*..." (GAA 334, no. 19, fol. 281 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1518, no pagination).
28. Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 64. Robert C.-H. Shell, Blackburn's source, framed this step in a manner that well illuminates the trajectory of the Jewish discourse under discussion, "Baptism, a public imperative for the Catholic church, became a household choice for the Reformed Christian" (Robert C.-H. Shell, *Children of Bondage: A Social History of the Slave Society at the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1838* [Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press/University Press of New England, 1994], 334).
29. Franco Silva, *Esclavitud en Andalucia*, 128.
30. See the letter of 17 July 1576 from Friar Andrés de Carvajal of Santo Domingo reporting the resolutions of the first Diocesan Synod of Santo Domingo (Saez, *Iglesia y el negro*, 136). The same view prevailed in peninsular Jaén, enacted in the 1624 Constitution of the town's Church (López Molina, *Esclavitud en Jaén*, 125).
31. The Instruction, dated 20 February 1614, was reprinted in Sandoval, *Tratado*, 493-503.
32. Canon of the Council's second session, 6 November 1622, reproduced in Saez, *Iglesia y el negro*, 152-57; quotation from 153.
33. Rodríguez Martín and López Adán, *Esclavitud en Toledo*, 75.
34. Terms of the Resolution which the Gentlemen of the Mahamad took on 9 Sh'vat 5418 [1658]: the *Rubitim* [?; schoolmasters] may not admit Ashkenazic, Italian and mulatto boys to our talmud torah schools to study. The Gentlemen of the Mahamad, having been informed that in our talmud torah schools are many boys who are Ashkenazic on both sides and others who also are [Ashkenazic] on their mother's or father's side and Mulattos, sons of Portuguese [Jews]. The said Gentlemen, eager to search out the truth of the matter, found this to be the case and considering such a great prejudice and for the good rearing of the sons of the portuguese nation from spain that the sons of Askenazim should be reared among them. They Resolve & ordain from this Holy Congregation that the establishment [of this resolution] be observed. To Wit, ... from today onward no *tudesco* youth, [no youth] of an Italian father and mother, [no] mulatto may be admitted to the said talmud torah schools, excepting sons of the members of this Holy Congregation. And one who has a father or mother who is not Portuguese will give account to the Senhores of the Mahamad, who will decide whether the boy will be permitted and having five votes from these [men] will be admitted. And the teachers who admit into their schools a youth who is not from a Portuguese or Spanish father and mother without license from the Senhores of the Mahamad will thereafter be condemned to [give] to sedaca twenty florins for the first time and for the second time [his fine] will be at the determination of the Senhores of the Mahamad.

(Livro dos Acordos, 9 Shvat 5418 [1658], GAA 334, no. 19, fol. 426 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1518, no pagination; also cited in Yosef Kaplan, "The Portuguese Community in Amsterdam in the Seventeenth Century: Between Tradition and Change" [Hebrew], *Reports of the Israeli National Academy of Sciences* 7, no. 6 [1986]: 168.)

35. *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Slaves, 8:18. This view was corroborated in the commentaries of Yosef Karo, *Kesef Mishneh* (Venice, 1574-75), ad loc., and Avraham b. Moshe de Botton, *Lehem Mishneh* (Venice, 1609), ad loc.
36. Palmer, *Slaves of the White God*, 54.
37. In 1555 the first Mexican Ecclesiastical Provincial Council declared Indians, mestizos, mulattos, descendants of Moors, Jews, and persons sentenced by the Inquisition "inherently unworthy of the sacerdotal office." The Third Provincial Council (1585) relaxed this somewhat, admitting "Mexicans who are descended in the first degree from Amerindians, or from Moors, or from parents of whom one is a Negro." By implication, full-blood Indians and Blacks remained unacceptable for admission (Boxer, *Church Militant*, 15-16).
38. *Ibid.*, 9.
39. Reprinted in Saez, *Iglesia y el negro*, 155-56.
40. He cited a 1661 regulation that no Italian students were to be admitted to the *yeshiva*. Melkman clearly based himself on the work of his subject, David Franco Mendes, who gave the same date and also failed to mention mulattos (see Chapter 10). If the revocation Melkman discussed actually existed, whether it applied only to Italian students or all Melkman discussed cannot be ascertained (Melkman, *David Franco Mendes*, 21). He cited of those excluded cannot be ascertained (Melkman, *David Franco Mendes*, 21). He cited M. C. Paraira and J. S. da Silva Rosa, *Gedenkschrift Uitgegeven Ter Gelegenheid Van Het 300-jarig Bestaan Van Talmud Tora en Ets Haim* (Amsterdam, 1916), 33, which I was unable to investigate.
41. See Chapter 9. The communal ordinances of the Sephardic congregations in Morocco, for instance, made no mention of issues related to the burial or ritual participation of slaves (Shalom Bar-Asher, ed., *The Takanot of the Jews of Morocco: A Collection of Communal Ordinances from the 16th to 18th Century as Found in "Kerem Hemer" II by Avraham Ankawa* [Jerusalem: Zalman Shazar Center/Hebrew University of Jerusalem, 1977]).
42. See Chapter 9.
43. It is most unfortunate that we cannot compare the Amsterdam *ascamot* with those of congregations in Spain and Portugal from the second half of the fifteenth century, no extant versions of which have come to my attention.
44. Printed in Lindo, *History*, 381-83; Lucien Wolf, "American Elements in the Re-Settlement," *TJHSE* 3 (1896/98): 94.
45. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 24. Nassy and his companions obtained privileges for settling Cayenne from the Dutch West India Company in 1659.
46. On this early Dutch seaborne expansion, see Cornelis Ch. Goslinga, *The Dutch in the Caribbean and on the Wild Coast, 1580-1680* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1971), 43-88.
47. C. R. Boxer, *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola* (London: University of London/The Athlone Press, 1952), 40. A 1621 pamphlet noted that the Guinea coast "employed 20 [Dutch] ships and 400 men and netted a profit of 1,200,000 guilders" annually (Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 96).
48. Postma, *Dutch in the Slave Trade*, 10; Willie F. Page, *The Dutch Triangle: The Netherlands and the Atlantic Slave Trade, 1621-1664* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), 18.
49. Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 146, citing the 31 July 1623 minutes of the council.
50. Johannes Menne Postma, "The Origin of African Slaves: The Dutch Activities on the Guinea Coast, 1675-1795," in *Race and Slavery in the Western Hemisphere: Quantitative*

- Studies*, edited by Stanley Engerman and Eugene D. Genovese (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 35.
51. Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 146. He unfortunately provided no details or references.
 52. Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 237-38.
 53. Israel, "Sephardi Contribution," 376.
 54. Mello, *Gente da nação*, 78; Meerkerk, *Recife*, 195.
 55. Jonathan I. Israel outlined the internal social and religious motivations for this movement (Israel, "Dutch Sephardic Colonization").
 56. Joseph M. Corcos, *A Synopsis of the History of the Jews of Curaçao from the Day of Their Settlement to the Present Time* (Curaçao: Imprenta de la Libreria, 1897), 7. In 1653, a request by some Jews on Curaçao to purchase more slaves for agricultural employment was rejected, although a 1659 letter from New Amsterdam governor Peter Stuyvesant complained that they had managed to induce the Dutch West India Company into letting them make such purchases (G. Herbert Cone, "The Jews in Curaçao. According to Documents from the Archives of the State of New York," *PAJHS* 10 [1902]: 144-45, 151 [letter from the Directors of the WIC to Gov. Stuyvesant, 24 July 1653], 155-56 [letter from Stuyvesant to the Directors, 26 December 1659]).
 57. M. Grunwald and J. Cassuto, Jr., "An Unpublished Transcript Regarding a Jewish Colony at Serepique (Sergipe, Brazil?), 1658," *PAJHS* 17 (1909): 199-200. That Serepique was Brazilian territory makes little sense, as the Dutch had just been ousted from Brazil in 1654. Serepique may well be a corruption of Essequibo, as suggested by Samuel Oppenheim, "An Early Jewish Colony in Western Guiana, 1658-1666: And Its Relation to the Jews in Surinam, Cayenne and Tobago," *PAJHS* 16 (1907): 105, n. 28.
 58. Samuel Oppenheim, *ibid.*, 102. One should recall the words of Robert Carlyle Batie: "The smallest competitive sugar plantation [on seventeenth-century Jamaica] contained several dozen workers, while noticeably successful properties had between 60 and 200 hands" (Robert Carlyle Batie, "Why Sugar? Economic Cycles and the Changing of Staples on the English and French Antilles," in *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy: A Student Reader*, edited by Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd [New York: New Press, 1991], 43-44. It is unclear just who sat on this Colonization Committee, that is, whether it included Sephardic Jews, Dutch Christians, or both.
 59. Printed in Wolf, "American Elements," 84-85, and in Samuel Oppenheim, "Early Jewish Colony," 114. Someone among the Amsterdam Sephardim held the potential of colonialization important enough to translate into Portuguese the "New conditions" drawn up in 1658 by the burgermeisters of Middleburg, Flushing, and Vere and the West India Company (in GAA 334, no. 1351). The fifth clause of these conditions made clear the connection between the productivity of Black slave labor and the receipt of privileges for the masters: "the colonists will be free from all tithes, *peytas*, tolls, personal right [?], and other charges which can be named for a period of seven years; he who makes a Royal Sugar Plantation with fifty blacks, will earn twelve years of the same Immunity; he who makes a Sugar Mill with thirty blacks [will gain] nine years." The term *engenho de bóis* in Portuguese referred to a sugar mill, whose grinding mechanism often was powered by oxen (see, for instance, Caspar Schmalkalden, *Die Wundersamen Reisen Des Caspar Schmalkalden Nach West- und Ostindien, 1642-1652*, edited by Wolfgang Joost [Weinheim, GDR: Acta Humaniora, 1983], 50). By 1659, David Nassi had signed

- a contract with the WIC for the latter to deliver 114 Blacks to him or his representative at Cayenne (25 September 1659, GAA NA 1309, fols. 40-43).
60. Friedenwald, "Material," 66; see also Meyer Kayserling, "The Jews in Jamaica and Daniel Israel Lopez Laguna," *Jewish Quarterly Review* 12 (1900): 709. Kayserling stated that Enriquez came from Amsterdam. A translation from a better copy was provided in Wilfred S. Samuel, "Sir William Davidson, Royalist (1616-1689), and the Jews," *TJHSE* 14 (1935/39): 70-72. Samuel also provided convincing circumstantial evidence that the intent of the partnership between various members of the Bueno Enriquez family and Sir William Davidson was to supply West African slaves to English West Indian planters in competition with the then-regnant Dutch West India Company (Samuel, "Davidson and the Jews," 45).
 61. Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, "Between Amsterdam and New Amsterdam: The Place of Curaçao and the Caribbean in Early Modern Jewish History," *AJH* 72, no. 2 (December 1982): 189.
 62. A merchant, Joseph da Costa, appears in various Amsterdam notarial deeds (see Koen et al, "Notarial Records"). A Joseph da Costa was elected parnas of the Talmud Tora, the communal school, in 1639 (Franco Mendes, *Memorias*, 49), in 5407 = 1647/8 ("Livro dos acordos," GAA 334, no. 19, fol. 224), as *administrador* for the "mesva de Abodat Ahesed" in 5410 = 1650/1 (*ibid.*, fol. 282), as community parnas in 1640/1, and as *gabay* in 1649/50 ("Register van namen van personen die een bestuursfunctie hebben bekleed bij de gemeente of bij één der gebroederschappen, 1639-1730," GAA 334, no. 155). His daughter married the son of the merchant Abraham Aboab/Denis Jenis, probably the parnas mentioned below (Koen et al, "Notarial Records," SR 17, 1 [January 1983]: 75, n. 67), though Pieterse (*Livro de Bet Haim*, 184) stated that it was his son who married the daughter of Aboab/Jenis. Pieterse thought that this Joseph da Costa, who bore the alias Juan Peres da Cunha, was already engaged in the Brazil trade in the second decade of the seventeenth century and around 1650 left for Brazil, where in 1652 he served as parnas of congregation Zur Israel in Recife (Pieterse, *Livro de Bet Haim*, 184). A large shareholder in the WIC, Da Costa arrived in New Amsterdam in 1655 from Holland (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 168; Pieterse, *Livro de Bet Haim*, 184).
 63. Moses Salom, alias André d'Azevedo (d. 1641); brother of parnas Abraham Salom (see below); merchant in Antwerp (as late as 1623) then in Amsterdam; traded with the peninsula (?); member of congregation Bet Israel, joined the Santa Companhia de Dotar Orphas e Donzellas in 1643/4 (Koen et al, "Notarial Records," SR 12, nos. 1-2 [July 1978]: 172, n. 112).
 64. David de Oliveyra: parnas of the Talmud Tora school in 5395 = 1635/6 ("Livro dos acordos"); a "David de oliveyra letrado" served as one of the first *administradores* of the Hevra de Bikur Holim in 1639/40 (Franco Mendes, *Memorias*, 49); communal parnas in 1641 and 1652 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155).
 65. Abraham Salom, alias Joan or Joao de Paz (1588-1652), merchant in Antwerp (as late as 1623) then Amsterdam; traded with the peninsula (?); parnas of the first mahamad of congregation Talmud Tora (5399 = 1639/40); appointed member of the Dotar in 1631/2 (Koen et al, "Notarial Records," SR 12, nos. 1-2 [July 1978]: 172, n. 112); served as an administrator of the Dotar in 5398 (1637/8; GAA 334, no. 1142, fol. 241); *deputado* of congregation Bet Jahacob in 1633/4 (GAA 334, no. 13, fol. 95).

66. David [H]ergas (b. 1593?); deputado of Bet Jahacob in 1633/4 (GAA 334, no. 13, fol. 95); served as an administrator of the Dotar in 5398 (1637/8; GAA 334, no. 1142, fol. 241); parnas on first mahamad of the united congregation Talmud Tora in 5399 = 1639/40 and again in 1644/5 and 1648/9 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155); parnas of the Aby Jetomim society in 5407 = 1647/8.
67. Joseph Abeniacar, alias Diogo Martins Bondia (1580-1648). This signature is a repeat of the Joseph Abemaca from 1641. He was a merchant, mentioned in 63 deeds between 1612 and 1658, who acted as a freighter of salt, wool, sugar, wine and grain and who traded in textiles, wool and tobacco; in 1620 he became a member of the Dotar (Koen et al, "Notarial Records," SR 16,1 [March 1982]: 70, n. 68; SR 16,2 [November 1982]: 214 [deed no. 2106]); served as an administrator of the Dotar in 5398 = 1637/8 (GAA 334, no. 1142, fol. 241); one of the authors of the ascamot for the unified congregations in 1639 (Mendes dos Remédios, *Judeus portugueses em Amsterdam*, 192); parnas in 1640/1, 1644/5 and 1648/9.
68. In 1639 Jesurun (or Jesurun Rodrigues) served as one of the seven members of the first mahamad of the unified Amsterdam Sephardic congregation (Wiznitzer, "Merger Agreement," 111), a position he also filled in 1644 and 1648 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155).
69. No such name appeared in the "Livro dos Gerasoims" of the family of Jacob Belmonte (printed as Appendix 9 in Richard J. H. Gottheil, *The Belmont-Belmonte Family: A Record of Four Hundred Years* [New York: Privately printed, 1917], though an Isaac b. Abraham Belmonte was buried in the Ouderkerk cemetery on 24 Tishri 5425 (1664) (ibid., 89). An Isaac Israel Belmonte was elected parnas of the Ets Haim school in 1647, 1649, and 1656 (and an Isaac Belmonte in 1663, 1675, 1680, and 1685), while an Isaac Belmonte merited election as a parnas of the congregation in 1643, 1648, 1653, 1660, 1664, 1668, and 1672 (ibid., 90). A "Señor Ishac Belmonte" appeared among the people to whom Menashe Ben Israel dedicated his book, *The Hope of Israel*, in 1650, probably the signatory in question. Isaac Nuñez Belmonte was none other than the famous and wealthy Baron Manuel Belmonte (d. 1704). An Isak Pereira Belmonte was an associate of Abraham de Fonseca in the diamond trade prior to 1652 (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 43, n. 43).
70. Joseph de los Rios, alias Martin Rodriguez (d. 1664) and also Michel van der Rivieren (according to Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 122): one of the community's wealthiest and most prominent merchants, conducting extensive trade with Spain; parnas in 1641, 1647, 1653 and 1658 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155). In 1639 he bought pepper from the Dutch East India Company and was listed in 1646/7 as an importer/exporter in the record books of the Levantine Trading Company (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 119, 86, n. 55). In 1660 he opened a sugar refinery in Amsterdam (Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 154). Jacques Richard, the Spanish consul at Amsterdam, estimated his fortune at between 200,000 and 300,000 guilders.
71. Elected parnas of the *Bikur Holim* (= Visiting the Sick) society in 5425 (1665/66) (Yosef Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism*, 190, n. 55). Elected community parnas in 1647 and 1660, while in 1663 he received the honor of being hatan Tora ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155).
72. Jeuda Touro was elected parnas only once, in 1647 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155). A Juda Toro was listed in the Levantine Trading Company record books for April 1646-May 1647 as importing goods worth 16,870 guilders, the smallest

- of the merchants mentioned (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 87). According to records for 1647/48, a Judah Toro shipped 25 rolls of Barbados tobacco to Genoa (cited in Israel, "Dutch Sephardic Colonization," 143, n. 13). An Abraham de Judah Touro, his son (?), was among the wealthiest of the community, assigned a seat in the synagogue near the bench of the mahamad, while in 1675 he purchased the old synagogue building (Yosef Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism*, 205-6).
73. Jaacob Gabay Faro was elected parnas of the Talmud Tora congregation in 1647 and 1652 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155).
74. Senior was elected to the mahamad only once ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155).
75. As Amsterdam hosted several prominent men by this name, their biographies remain muddled. One Abraham Aboab, alias Alfonso Roiz Cardozo, was known as "the Elder." A merchant with family and business connections in Hamburg, he served as a deputado of Bet Jacob in 1614 (Pieterse, *Daniel Levi de Barrios*, 93) and as an administrator of the Bet Haim at some point between 1619 and 1630 (GAA 334, no. 1). The other, more likely, Abraham Aboab (b. ca. 1596 in Lisbon) went by the alias Denis Jenes (Yanes, Jenes, Jennis, etc.). An active merchant between 1619, when he first arrived in Amsterdam, and 1675 with a consortium of other Amsterdam merchants in the Moroccan trade (ca. 1630; Kellenbenz, *Sephardim*, 133); in 1619 he married Sara, the daughter of wealthy merchant and parnas Baruh/Bento Osorio, with whom he worked, and sister of parnas David/Bento Osorio (mentioned below); this Aboab was probably the first Portuguese Jew to own a landed estate, acquiring an estate in Maarssen, called "Hogesant"; Aboab/Jenis's son Baruch married the daughter of parnas Jozef da Costa (Koen et al, "Notarial Records," SR 17,1 [January 1983]: 75, n. 67). According to De Barrios, and corroborated in communal records, this (?) Abraham Aboab was one of the first *administradores de los sepultureros* between 1648 and 1683; served in 1647 as chief administrator of Hebra de Gemilut Hasadim, while in 1657 an Abraham Aboab served as one of the *administradores* of the Dotar (Franco Mendes, *Memórias*, 28); gabay for the Talmud Tora mahamad in 1641, 1647, 1654 and 1662, while acting as treasurer of Ets Haim in 1650 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155). One of these two Abraham Aboabs (?) co-authored the ascamot for the unified congregations in 1639. This signatory, whichever of these Abraham Aboabs he was, may well have owned the slave women buried in the cemetery (see Chapter 3).
76. Selomoh Salom, alias Antonio d'Azevedo (b. 1613): son of the merchant and parnas Moses Salom (mentioned above); merchant, continued trading under the name of his father's and uncle's firm (Joan de Paz and André d'Azevedo) together with his brother Semuel, then alone (Koen et al, "Notarial Records," SR 12, nos. 1-2 [July 1978]: 172, n. 112). Elected to the mahamad in 1647 (as gabay), 1654, 1659, and 1666 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155). Served as presiding parnas in 1654 during which time he "conferred" with another parnas over the proposed plans of Manuel Martínez Dormido (aka David Abrabanel) and David Nassi (aka Josef Nunes da Fonseca) for obtaining permission for Jewish settlement in London (Israel, "Dutch Sephardic Colonization," 157). He also served as treasurer of the Ets Haim society in 5428 (1668/69) (Yosef Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism*, 192, n. 63). In 1669, a Salomon Salom asked the "solicitor" Samuel Abarbanel to protest in his name against the taxes imposed on him, saying his worth wasn't enough to fall under the tax law (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 205, n. 10).

77. Merchant and father of the philosopher Baruch/Benedict Spinoza, he on occasion traded in goods from Salé, Morocco, imported fruit from Spain and Portugal, oil from Algeria, pipes, and other items (see Steven Nadler, *Spinoza: A Life* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 31–41). In 1637 he was admitted to the Santa Companhia de dotar (the organization whose purpose was to fund doweries for poor and orphaned girls) (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 16–17) and also contributed 52 florins to the Brotherhood of the Talmud Tora and Ets Haim yeshiva ("Registro dos Benefactores da Yrmandade de T.T. & Ets-Haim. Com Memória dos Legados que Fizerao," GAA 334, No. 1073 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1867). In 1650 he was named an administrator of the "Mesva de Abodat Ahesed" (= Mitsva of Service of Lovingkindness) ("Livro dos acordos," GAA 334, No. 19, fol. 282 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1518, no pagination). Bloom wrote that the elder Spinoza was appointed as head of the Misvah do Emprestino (= The Good Deed of Lending, a Jewish loan bank to help poor coreligionists; Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 16–17).
78. I could not definitively identify Bueno, as several men bore this name. An Isaac Bueno returned from the "lands of idolatry," i.e., Catholic territories, and requested forgiveness on 22 Shvat 5414 (1654) (ascamot 1, fol. 357; Yosef Kaplan, "The Travels of Portuguese Jews from Amsterdam to the 'Lands of Idolatry' [1660–1724]," in *Jews and Conversos: Studies in Society and the Inquisition*, edited by Yosef Kaplan [Jerusalem: Magnes Press/Hebrew University, 1985], 213). Such travels to Catholic territories were usually conducted for commercial purposes. Kaplan listed Bueno as the son of Abraham Bueno de Moura. His father apparently came to Amsterdam with him in 1649. In 1675 he paid an annual finta of 4 florins, and of 10 florins in 1689: "He was a regular contributor to the synagogue treasury" (ibid., 219, n. 67). An Ishac Bueno was elected gabay in 1652 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155). Another (?) Isaac de Abraham Bueno returned from the "lands of idolatry" and requested forgiveness on 12 Iyyar 5411 (1651) (Yosef Kaplan, "Travels of Portuguese Jews," 213, 218, n. 60).
79. David Osorio, alias Bento or Christovao Gomes Osorio (b. 1587?): son of Baruh Osorio, who also went by the alias of Bento Osorio, who was at times the wealthiest merchant in the community, involved in shipping, the Africa trade, salt and Brazil-wood, buying pepper from the EIC (Kellenbenz, *Sephardim*, 127–28; Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 11, n. 54, 119). David de Bento Osorio, also a merchant, continued his father's trade, already operating under his father's alias before the latter's death in 1644, making it difficult to distinguish between the two figures. Nonetheless, it is clear that the son became fabulously wealthy as well. In the 1646/47 record books of the Levantine Trading Company, one of these two Bento Osorios is listed as the most prominent Sephardic merchant, importing goods valued at 70,575 guilders or about 3% of the total. This same person also headed the list of Jewish exporters, at 32,500 guilders or about 1½% of the total. In 1646, Osorio had the largest Jewish account with the Bank of Amsterdam, though by 1651 it had been surpassed (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 86–87, 175). David Osorio was appointed as one of the three representatives to negotiate on behalf of Bet Israel regarding the unification of the three congregations; served as president of the first mahamad of the united congregation Talmud Tora (5399 = 1639/40) and signatory to the original 39 ascamot; communal parnas in 1643/4, 1648/9, 1653/4 and 1657/8; parnas of the Aby Jetomim society in 5408 = 1648/9 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155).

80. Telles was elected parnas in 1651 and treasurer of Ets Haim in 1667, 1677, 1680, and 1683. He received the honor of being *hatan bereshit* in the synagogue for 1651 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155).
81. Mussaphia was a jeweler; in 1660 he provided jewels to another Amsterdam merchant to sell in London (Edgar Roy Samuel, "Manuel Levy Duarte," 12). Mussaphia was elected parnas in 1652, 1656, 1661, and 1671 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155) and was a member of the *Keter Torah* (= Crown of Torah) brotherhood (founded in 1643 by Saul Levi Morteira) (Yosef Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism*, 112). Mussaphia was apparently one of the first students of this group (David Franco Mendes, "Memórias Do Estabelecimento e Progresso Dos Judeus Portugueses e Espanhóis Nesta Famosa Cidade de Amsterdam [Amsterdam, 1769]," published with introduction and notes by L. Fuks and R. G. Fuks-Mansfield, SR 9, no. 2 [1975]: 53). In 1668, a D^r Benjamin Musaphia, presumably the same person, donated 600 florins to the Brotherhood of the Talmud Tora and Ets Haim yeshiva ("Registro dos Benefactores da Yrmandade de T.T. & Ets-Haim"). In 1677, S^r H. D^r Benjamin Músaphia bequeathed 2,000 florins to the same Brotherhood ("Copia de Varios Termos e Verbas de diversos Testamentos, aCargo da Irmandade de Hes-Haim, estrahidas do Livro vello que para Em poder dos Tezoureiros Sucesivam^{te} no qual se achaõ os originaes," GAA 334, No. 1074 = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1868).
82. Semuel Salom, alias Jorge d'Azevedo (1618–1662): son of the previously-mentioned merchant and parnas Moses Salom; merchant, continued trading under the name of his father's and uncle's firm (Joan de Paz and André d'Azevedo) together with his brother Selomoh (Koen et al, "Notarial Records," SR 12, nos. 1–2 [July 1978]: 172, n. 112). A Semuel salom was listed as a student at the higher bet midrash of R. Saul Levi Mortera in the Talmud Tora school in 1651 (GAA 334, no. 122, fol. 7). Salom was elected to the mahamad in 1658 and 1663 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155). He was one of those who appointed Michael d'Espinosa to head the Misvah do Emprestino in 1650 (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 17, n. 79).
83. Physician; acquired citizenship (*poorterschap*) 24 February 1651, apparently after his admission to the *Collegium* (Yosef Kaplan, *From Christianity to Judaism*, 202, n. 103). He was elected as parnas in 1646, 1653, 1658, and 1663 ("Register van namen van personen," GAA 334, no. 155). An Aphraim Bueno copublished the first Hebrew book to be printed in Amsterdam, a *siddur* (= prayer book), in January 1627 (Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 46, n. 58). Bueno also partially financed the printing of a 1628 concordance by Menasseh Ben Israel, *Sefer Pnei Raba*. According to Meyer Kayserling, Bueno cofounded the Torah Or (= Torah is Light) yeshiva with Abraham Pereyra (Meyer Kayserling, *Biblioteca española-portuguesa judaica*, reprint of Strasbourg, 1890 ed., with an introduction by Y. H. Yerushalmi [New York, 1971], 53 [s.v., "Bueno, Ephraim Hisquiah"]). In 1661 he donated 100 florins to the Brotherhood of the Talmud Tora and Ets Haim yeshiva ("Registro dos Benefactores da Yrmandade de T. T. & Ets-Haim").
84. No documentation mentions this figure. An Abraham Drago (a relative?) signed the *haskamot* of the Recife congregation in 1648. When he fled Brazil because of the rebellion of the Portuguese planters, he left behind substantial property, for which the Portuguese Crown later reimbursed Drago to the tune of 1,582 florins (Israel, "Dutch Sephardic Colonization," 147–48; Mello, *Gente da nação*, 374).

85. On the connection between peninsular and colonial exclusionary mechanisms, see Jonathan Boyarin, "Jews, Indians and the Identity of Christian Europe," unpublished manuscript (New York, 1996); Mörner, *Race Mixture*, 54-56. Boxer wrote that the frequent phrase *raças infectas* ("infected races") included Jews, Moors (i.e., Muslims), and Blacks, though without providing any hints as to the dating or history of this formation (C. R. Boxer, *Portuguese Society in the Tropics: The Municipal Councils of Goa, Macao, Bahia, and Luanda, 1510-1800* [Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1965], 148). Blacks were only added to the configuration in the sixteenth century and after. María Elena Martínez López is currently working on teasing out a more detailed understanding of how the peninsular system transmogrified into the colonial system (see "The Spanish Concept of Limpieza de Sangre and the Emergence of the 'Race/Caste' System in the Viceroyalty of New Spain [Mexico]" [Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 2002]).
86. Cope, *Limits of Racial Domination*, 24; G. Aguirre Beltrán, *La población negra de México, 1519-1810*, 2d ed. (Mexico City: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1972), 163; John K. Chance, *Race and Class in Colonial Oaxaca* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1978), 126, 193. For the Santa Veracruz parish, see Edgar F. Love, "Marriage Patterns of Persons of African Descent in a Colonial Mexico City Parish," *HAHR* 51, no. 1 (February 1971): 79-91.
87. Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1969), 126.
88. An English Guinea Company had already been organized in 1618. The African or American trading companies of Sweden, Courland, and Brandenburg had been set up by independent Dutch traders as "flags of convenience" (Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 191).
89. Mentioned in Chapter 7; see Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 113. Bodian saw a "particularly conspicuous" instance of the "reinforcement of Iberian . . . norms," in this case sociosexual, over *halakhic* principles in the statutes of the Santa Companhia de dotar orfãos e donzelas pobres, which accepted the illegitimate daughters of Sephardic fathers as potential dowery recipients, but not those of Sephardic mothers (Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 115).
90. Though any woman's being seen at all was remote; an English traveler, Philip Skippon, visited the Amsterdam synagogue in 1663 and wrote that "the women are not seen in it, but have a gallery round the top with lattice windows" (cited in Swetschinski, "Portuguese Jewish Merchants," 452).
91. The date might have even been several days later, as the decree appears in the source, undated, just below an entry of 18 Elul 5401.
92. Alejo Carpentier, "Music in Cuba," an extract, translated by Alan West-Durán, *Transition* 9, no. 1/2 (2000): 183.
93. Cited in Vaughan, *Roots of American Racism*, 170.
94. The term "pigmentocracy" was first used by the Chilean Alejandro Lipschütz, *El indioamericano y el problema racial en las Américas*, 2d ed. (Santiago de Chile, 1944), 75 and passim, then picked up by Mörner, *Race Mixture*, 54, whence it entered the scholarly vocabulary. It was later used by Boxer, *Church Militant*, 38.
95. Jordan, *White Over Black*, 97; Theodore W. Allen, *The Invention of the White Race*, Vol. 1: *Racial Oppression and Social Control* (London: Verso, 1994), 261, n. 76.
96. Allen, *Invention of the White Race*, *ibid.*

97. Nancy Shoemaker, "How Indians Got to Be Red," *AHR* 102, no. 3 (June 1997): 631.
98. Allen's study of the "invention" of Whiteness focused almost exclusively on the Irish and Scottish histories, and was not meant to be exhaustive. In fact, far earlier cases exist where Whiteness carried a legislative function. C. R. Boxer related that a "royal decree of 1528 reprimanded the governor [of São Tomé] for opposing the election of Mulattoes to the town council, declaring they were perfectly eligible so long as they were married men of substance" (Boxer, *Race Relations*, 17). I infer from this that candidacy for the town council had been hitherto determined on a "Whites only" basis. Since the color-complex in each local situation differed, one finds that at the same moment of the late seventeenth century, in Angola, the Portuguese Crown was still fighting the locally generated color prejudice when it went against the interests of the state. In 1684, the Crown "specifically ruled that no attention should be paid to a man's colour when military promotions and appointments were made in the Angola garrison and militia units" (Boxer, *Race Relations*, 31), but this official equality was due mostly to the absence of White soldiers, who often did not survive local conditions and diseases.
99. Much of what follows thus agrees with the conclusions of J. B. Segal, "White and Black Jews at Cochin, The Story of a Controversy," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, no. 2 (1983): 232.
100. The earliest Jews dwelled in such places as Cranganore (or Shingly), Palur, Madai, Calicut, Muttam (or Muttath), and perhaps other places on the Malabar coast. The concentration of Jews in and near Cochin came only after 1341, when a flood changed the shape of the coastline, silting up the once-thriving port of Cranganore and opening Cochin as a major harbor for trade (see J. B. Segal, *A History of the Jews of Cochin* [London: Vallentine Mitchell, 1993]; David G. Mandelbaum, "Social Stratification Among the Jews of Cochin in India and in Israel," in *Jews in India*, edited by Thomas A. Timberg [Sahibabad, India: Vikas Publishing House, 1986], 61-120).
101. S. S. Koder, "Saga of the Jews of Cochin," in *Jews in India*, 137, n. 32. As mentioned in note 99, a flood "created" the port town of Cochin in 1341. Cranganore was sacked by the Portuguese in 1504, by the Muslims in 1524 (seeking to oust the Jews and then the Portuguese), and again by the Portuguese in 1565/66 (Nathan Katz and Ellen S. Goldberg, *The Last Jews of Cochin: Jewish Identity in Hindu India* [Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1993], 6, 64). For historical reference, the Portuguese arrived in India in 1498, the Dutch ousted them in 1663, and the British expelled the Dutch in 1797.
102. Benjamin's description was quite positive. It is unlikely, however, that Benjamin visited the region himself. He probably merely reported information he had heard (Yosef Levanon, *The Jewish Travellers in the Twelfth Century* [Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1980], 139), unless like other so-called travel liars, he invented things when convenient.
103. Levanon, *Jewish Travellers*, 99; Moses Maimonides, *A Maimonides Reader*, edited, with an introduction and notes by Isadore Twersky, Library of Jewish Studies (New York: Behrman House, 1972), 481-82.
104. Adler, *Jewish Travellers*, 59.
105. Segal, *History of the Jews of Cochin*, 11.
106. Adler, *Jewish Travellers*, 60.

- in 1686, when as a parnas he must have already attained a respectable age, this parnas might have been an older relative of our traveler.
124. George Alexander Kohut, "Correspondence Between the Jews of Malabar and New York a Century Ago," in *Semitic Studies in Memory of Rev. Dr. Alexander Kohut*, edited by George Alexander Kohut (Berlin: S. Calvary & Co., 1897), 428.
 125. The "questionnaire" constituted one of the forms of surveillance developed by and in the early modern era. Burke, *Historical Anthropology*, ch. 4 ("The Bishop's Questions and the People's Religion"), treated the Italian Church's late-seventeenth-century implementation of surveys that parish priests filled out about their parishioners. Church "visitors" to the "heathen" south of Italy compiled similar surveys on local popular religion and heresy. In the 1570s, Spain's Philip II had several questionnaires sent to officials in the New World, seeking "verifications, descriptions, and accounts of the complete state of the Indies and of each thing and its parts" (cited in Walden Browne, *Sahagún and the Transition to Modernity* [Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2000], 30). Humanist thinkers encouraged, and scientists and administrators relied on, the use of questionnaires by travelers (Justin Stagl, *A History of Curiosity: The Theory of Travel, 1550-1800* [Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers, 1995], esp. ch. 2).
 126. See Leo and Rena Fuks, "Jewish Historiography in the Netherlands in the 17th and 18th Centuries," in *Salo Wittmayer Baron Jubilee Volume on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, edited by Saul Lieberman (Jerusalem: American Academy for Jewish Research, 1975); Amzalak, in Pereyra de Paiva, *Notisias*, 19. Following were the Yiddish editions: Mosseh Pereyra de Paiva, *Kennis der yehudim von Kochin o der Zeitung aus Indien* (Amsterdam: Uri Phoebus, 1687). A second edition was *Wahrhaftige Kantschaft oder Hidushin aus Ostindia* (1688). The first Yiddish edition was reissued in 1713. Mendes dos Remedios mentioned a Spanish translation in the Montezinos Ets Haim Library in Amsterdam, without dating its production (Mendes dos Remedios, *Judeus portugueses em Amsterdam*, 112).
 127. The *Notisias* was cited by Tuvya ha-Cohen, *Ma'ase Tuvya o Sefer ha-Olamot* (Venice: Bragadina, 1707), 71b, and excerpted by Picart, *Cérémonies et Costumes*, in his chapter on the Jews in China and Hindustan.
 128. At the end of his list of the questions he put to the community (and its answers), Pereyra apologized for subjecting his "brothers" to the instruments of the ethnographic speculum, that is, for doubting their kinship: "All these Questions I put to them, notwithstanding that they follow our *minhag* [custom], because I am a great friend of informing myself with a basis for going by that which is certain" (*Notisias*, 15).
 129. The mechanisms allowing Pereyra's look at the Cochin Jews formed his knowledge differently from the medieval "Prester John" model, a difference appearing in the *Notisias*. Pereyra's informants told him (in response to one of his questions) that they first had notice of the Amsterdam Sephardic congregation in the 1620s (13), that is, due to the appearance of Dutch mercantile and colonial agents in India. His question marked an early bureaucratic Jewish attempt to inscribe the "simultaneity" of burgeoning nationalism then embodied in Dutch and English newspapers for a Jewish nation looking at itself anew in a changing global diaspora (see Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* [London/New York: Verso,

- 1991], 187-92). Pereyra's question about whether or not the informant community had been well treated by "the ministers of the Company," i.e., the Dutch East India Company, betrays this newly developing "simultaneity" — a kind of opportunity for minority countersurveillance (13).
130. The parenthetical dates for the arrival of the ancestors in Cochin come from S. S. Koder, "Saga of the Jews of Cochin," 121-42. His translation, however, was actually done by the Rt. Rev. Mgr. F. Figueiredo, Vicar General, Diocese of Cochin.
131. Katz and Goldberg, *Last Jews of Cochin*, 92.
132. Cited in Segal, *History of the Jews of Cochin*, 22.
133. As suggested by Segal in *ibid.*, 43.
134. *Ibid.*, 42; Bar-Giora, "Source Material," 246. One of the community's myths of origin centered on ancient immigrants from Majorca.
135. My reading of the list in the *Notisias* found corroboration in that of Tavim, "Os Judeus e a expansão portuguesa na Índia," 194-97, which I received only after the preparation of my manuscript.
136. Segal, "White and Black Jews," 237.
137. The literature on Indian castes — the term derives from the Portuguese *casta* — is vast. See, among recent titles, Susan Bayly, *Caste, Society and Politics in India from the Eighteenth Century to the Modern Age*, The New Cambridge History of India, pt. 4, vol. 3 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Chris Smaje, *Natural Hierarchies: The Historical Sociology of Race and Caste* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2000); Ronald Inden, *Imagining India* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990).
138. Bayly, *Caste, Society and Politics*, ch. 1, esp. 32, 35.
139. See Katz and Goldberg, *Last Jews of Cochin*, 133.
140. See Inden, *Imagining India*, 217-28, 239-44; Smaje, *Natural Hierarchies*, 181. One author who read the behavior of the Paradesi Jews as "accept[ing] the Indian mode of social stratification" is David G. Mandelbaum, "Caste and Community Among the Jews of Cochin in India and Israel," in *Caste Among Non-Hindus in India*, edited by Harjinder Singh [New Delhi: National Publishing House, 1977], 107-40).
141. Bar-Giora, "Source Material," 247. It was another Dutch immigrant, said Bar-Giora elsewhere, Moshe Sargon (?; סרגון), who came to Cochin shortly after Pereyra, who first used the term "Blacks" as a derogatory epithet for the local Jews who were not *meyuhasin* (Bar-Giora, "Source Material," 249). Unfortunately and disappointingly, Bar-Giora failed to produce any documentation.
142. My emphasis; Segal, *History of the Jews of Cochin*, 53-54. On the prominent merchant David Rahabi, who was not Sephardic, see Brian Weinstein, "Jewish Pepper Traders of the Malabar Coast," *Indo-Judaic Studies Journal* 5 (June 2002): 40-54.
143. Linschoten, *Discourse of Voyages*, 79.
144. GAA 334, No. 66, unbound items = CAHJP microfilm HM2 1565a, no pagination.
145. Some of these are described in José Alberto Rodrigues da Silva Tavim, "From Serúbal to the Sublime Porte: The Wanderings of Jácome de Olivares, New Christian and Merchant of Cochin (1540-1571)," in *Sinners and Saints: The Successors of Vasco da Gama*, edited by Sanjay Subrahmanyam (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995), 94-134. In the early seventeenth century, Samuel Castiel, an influential merchant and relative of the Castiels listed by Pereyra de Paiva, served the ruler of Cochin as interpreter

3. Samuel, "Jewish Colonists in Barbados," 46.
4. On the segregation of Calvinism and slaves, see Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 368-69; Van Lier, *Frontier Society*, 72-74; Brana-Shute, "Manumission in Suriname," 256-58.
5. Brana-Shute, *ibid.*, 231.
6. Cited in *ibid.*, 254. Brana-Shute did not identify any of the involved parties. This case constituted the only one found by Brana-Shute involving "a slave who actually managed a plantation."
7. Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 157-74. See also Fred. Oudschans Dentz, *De Kolonisatie Van de Portugeesch en de Geschiedenis Van de Joden Savanne*, 2d printing (Amsterdam: Menno Hertzberger, 1927), 27-28, and the various essays by P. A. Hilfman, Samuel Oppenheim, and others on Surinamese Jewry to be found in the early pages of the *Publications of the American Jewish Historical Society*.
8. Israel, *European Jewry*, 106.
9. "Classicale Acta Van Brazilie," in *Kroniek Van Het Historisch Genootschap Gevestigd Te Utrecht* (Utrecht, 1874), 29:386; cited in Mello, *Gente da nação*, 258.
10. Mello, *ibid.*, 284, n. 6. Those who had been drawn to Judaism came from among the Portuguese New Christians, who, it was argued, were only reclaiming their ancestral heritage. Such, for example, was the phrasing of the admittedly philo-Jewish Caspar Baerleus: "Ihrer edliche / die geborne Portugiesen seeind / hatten sich zu d'Zeit / da der König zu Hispanien dz Land noch inhatte / gestalt als wann sie Christen weren. Jetzo aber da sie eine gelindere Hohe Obrigkeit erlangt / und sich für der Inquisition nit mehr zu fürchten haben / halten sie es öffentlich wiederumb mit den Jüden" (Caspar Baerleus [Caspar Baerle], *Brasilianische Geschichte, Bei Achtjähriger in Selbigen Landen Geführter Regierung Seiner Fürstlichen Gnaden Herrn Johann Moritz, Fürstens zu Nassau u. Erstlich in Latein Durch Casparem Barlaeum Beschrieben* [Cleve: Tobias Silberling, 1659], 379-80).
11. See Chapter 2. Interestingly enough, this restriction was not included in the Council of Nineteen's original April 1642 efforts to prevent "scandalous" Jewish behavior, where no mention was made of the possession or employment of Christian servants (Mello, *Gente da nação*, 260-61).
12. English translation published in Hugh Hastings, ed., *Ecclesiastical Records of the State of New York* (Albany: James B. Lyon, 1901), 1:171; a transcription can be found in the Oppenheim Collection, Box 32, Folder 15, AJHS.
13. *Hascama* no. 32, 5409 (1649); cited in Chapter 7.
14. On the *mikve*, a brief notice from the Jewish Telegraph Agency came to my attention (*Jewish Bulletin of Northern California*, 12 May 2000, 28).
15. John Nieuhoff, "Voyages and Travels Into Brasil and the East-Indies: Containing, an Exact Description of the Dutch Brasil, and Divers Parts of the East-Indies . . . with a Most Particular Account of All the Remarkable Passages That Happened During the Author's Stay of Nine Years in Brasil; Especially, in Relation to the Revolt of the Portugueses, and the Intestine War Carried on There from 1640. to 1649," in *A Collection of Voyages and Travels, Some Now First Printed from Original Manuscripts. Others Translated Out of Foreign Languages, and Now First Publish'd in English*, 4 vols., edited by Awnsham and John Churchill (London: H. C. at the Black Swan in Pater-noster-Row, 1704), 49.

16. Dutch missionizing to Blacks in Brazil was minimized by Frans L. Schalkwijk, *The Reformed Church in Dutch Brazil (1630-1654)* (Zoetermeer: Bokencentrum, 1998), 150-51, 166, 188; Meerkerk, *Recife*, 306. Schalkwijk mentions, however, that some 600 "Africans" were baptized between 1634 and 1654, 7% of the total number of baptisms (Schalkwijk, *The Reformed Church in Dutch Brazil*, 151, n. 18).
17. *Dagelijkse Notulen van Brazilie*, 3 February 1645; cited in Mello, *Gente da nação*, 284, n. 6. On the other hand, various testimonies given before the Portuguese Inquisition claimed that Christian servants did convert to Judaism. The Inquisition trial of Paraíba resident Pedro de Almeida, for instance, apparently brought out the fact that his wife was a Portuguese Catholic who had been his servant before converting to Judaism (see T. T. Processo 11.562, which I have not been able to check, and Mello, *Gente da nação*, 259, 500).
18. Cited in Lipiner, *Izaque de Castro*, 32.
19. Du Tertre elsewhere provided figures on the 7 Jewish households of Martinique in 1664 which claimed in total 20 slaves (Tertre, *Histoire Generale*, 3:315). Mordechai Arbell argued that the slaves brought from Brazil were Native Americans, not Blacks, claiming that Du Tertre called them "savages" (Arbell, "Jewish Settlements," 290). Having checked his references, especially ch. 17, sec. 1 of Du Tertre, I found nothing of the sort. In any event, such an understanding makes little sense. Du Tertre always described them either as "esclaves" or "Nègres." No Amerindian slaves appear in any of the mentions of the slaves of Jews in the seventeenth-century French Caribbean territories (see, for example, the census from 1683 Martinique excerpted in Abraham Cahen, "Les Juifs de la Martinique au XVIIe Siècle," *Revue Des Études Juives* 2 [1881]: 114-16). Furthermore, by the mid-seventeenth century, Black Africans and not Brazilian Indians comprised the overwhelming majority of Brazil's slave population. See Tertre, *Histoire Generale*, 1:463-64, 492, 515; and the reprint, Jean Baptiste du Tertre, *Histoire Generale Des Antilles*, 4 vols. (Fort-de-France, Martinique: Editions C. E. P., 1958-59), 1:457-61.
20. Duarte de Albuquerque Coelho, pro-Portuguese chronicler of the animosities in Brazil, related regarding early Dutch attacks that leaving fortified Recife in 1635 "in the hands of the Blacks was not less dangerous, foremost, because one could little trust them, the enemy having publicized liberation for those who showed that they intervened against the crown" (Duarte de Albuquerque Coelho, *Memorias diarias de la Guerra del Brasil, por Discurso de Nueve años, empezando desde el de M.DC.XXX* [Madrid: Diego Diaz de la Carrera, 1654], 186v). Another chronicler, resident in Brazil, wrote that in the 1640s, a ship arrived from Angola bearing Congolese Blacks to help the Dutch, who controlled Angola at the time (Frei Manoel Calado, *O VALEROSO LVCIDENO. E TRIVMPHO DA LIBERDADE. PRIMEIRA PARTE. COMPOSTA POR O P. MESTRE FREI MANOEL CALADO da Ordem de S. Paulo Primeiro Ermitão, da Congregação Dos Eremitas da Serra d'Ossa, Natural de Villaviçosa. DEDICADA AO SERENISSIMO SENHOR DOM THEODOSIO Principe Do Reyno, & Monarchia de Portugal* [Lisbon: Paulo Craesbeeck, Impressor, & liureiro das Ordens Militares, 1648], 304).
21. Pierre Moreau, *Histoire Des Derniers Troubles Du Bresil. Entre les Hollandois et les Portugais* (Paris: Chez Augustin Courbe, au Palais en la Gallerie des Merciers, à la Palme, 1651), 25-26. Thanks to Malik Ghachem for translating the passage with me.
22. J. Hartog, *Curaçao: From Colonial Dependence to Autonomy* (Aruba: De Wit, 1968), 148.
23. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:146.

24. Jacob Rader Marcus, *The Colonial American Jew: 1492-1776*, 3 vols. (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1970), 1:200.
25. Unfortunately, I have been unable yet to find any pertinent evidence from seventeenth-century Surinam. The list of births going back into the eighteenth century (to 1777), records no circumcisions of slaves, only a literal handful of colored individuals. With the entries from the early nineteenth century, immersions of older slave women and the circumcision of sons born to slave women are mentioned on occasion (only the latter were freed). The earliest example might be the following, from 14 July 1813: "son of the Black woman Jaba, slave of Abraham Haim Nunes Henriques; NB. Circumcised at 13 days old, as free" (Registro de notação dos nascimentos do K: K: Beraha Ve-Salom, Algemeen RijksArchief, Port.-Israel. Gemeente, no. 417). The same source mentions a list of ritual immersions (Registro de Banhamentos), which I have not been able to locate.
26. Translated in Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 159. The authors of the letter, dated 7 March 1794, were Abraham Bueno de Mesquita, Moses Hoheb Brandon, and Samuel Haim de la Parra.
27. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 242, n. 9. Two skeletal case studies on slaves who had belonged to Jews can be consulted. The first, the mulatto Mariana van Pinto, may have retained some form of Jewish identity; her sons were named Mathatias and Samuel (see Rosemary Brana-Shute, "Legal Resistance to Slavery in Eighteenth Century Suriname," in *Resistance and Rebellion in Suriname: Old and New*, edited by Gary Brana-Shute [Williamsburg, VA: College of William and Mary, 1990], 124-30). Goliath, who had belonged to J. del Castilho, does not seem to have remained in the orbit of the Jewish community (Hoogbergen, *The Boni Maroon Wars*, 10-12).
28. The first number comes from a 1762 survey of Jodensavanne (Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 159). The second number from Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 142.
29. Brana-Shute, "Manumission in Suriname," 260.
30. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 71. The name could be a mistaken or changed form of De Britto, a prominent Sephardic planter family.
31. Among the library's holdings: the talmudic tractates Kidushin, Gittin, Ketubot, and Yevamot (among others); a commentary on the *Shulkhan Arukh* (though in bad condition [= mal tratado]); and, perhaps most crucially, three different multivolume editions of the *Shulkhan Arukh* itself (Records of Jurators of Surinam, Portuguese Jewish Communion [sic] / Archief der Nederlandsch-Portugeesch-Israelietische Gemeente in Suriname, No. 25 = AJA microfilm reel 67h, fols. 48-49).
32. P. A. Hilfman, "Notes on the History of the Jews in Surinam," *PAJHS* 18 (1909): 185, provided a list of the rabbis serving in Surinam until 1750.
33. Bradd Boxman, "Brit Milah in America: Difficulties and Challenges, 1733-1900" (term paper, Cincinnati, 1985), 1, SC-1287, AJA.
34. Snyder, "Sense of Place," 216, n. 19.
35. "Memorandum of those circumcised by Moses Seixas," printed in Frank Zimmerman, "A Letter and Memorandum on Ritual Circumcision, 1772," *PAJHS* 44, no. 1 (1954): 62-63; also the more detailed "Memorandum of Those Circumcised by Moses Seixas," *PAJHS* 27 (1920): 348-50. Seixas's possession of slaves is mentioned in Snyder, "Sense of Place," 218.

36. Zimmerman, "Letter on Ritual Circumcision," 60-62.
37. Barnard Jacobs, "Circumcision Book for Pa., 1757-1790," SC-5605, AJA.
38. Lyons Collection, P-15, Box 1-15, p. 1, AJHS. Holly Snyder rejected the idea that the Newport Sephardim employed Ashkenazic Jewish servants (personal correspondence, October 1999).
39. Mentioned in Samuel, "Jewish Colonists in Barbados," 77.
40. Moshe Lopez, *B'rachot ha-Mila. U-Minhag ve-Seder ha-Mila k'fi ha-Nahug b'zot ha-Kehila* [= Blessings for Circumcision. And the Custom and Order of the Circumcision Practiced in this Congregation] (Barbados, 1794). A note appended to the copy in the Jewish Theological Seminary rare-book room stated that the order was written for Moses Lopez, not by him. Lopez served as the Bridgetown community's *hazan*, or cantor.
41. Samuel, "Jewish Colonists in Barbados," 46.
42. Max J. Kohler, "The Jews and the American Anti-Slavery Movement. [Pt.] II," *PAJHS* 9 (1901): 46-47.
43. My emphasis; Levy Maduro, *Brit Yitshak*, 15b-16a.
44. He did so by conflating the cessation of Canaanite slave laws with the time universally assigned to the end of the institution of Hebrew slaves, the point at which the jubilee year supposedly was no longer observed (because of the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple, the absence of the Sanhedrin, and the twelve tribal representatives, etc.). Levy Maduro's view went counter to that of Rambam, who specifically distinguished between the laws pertaining to Hebrew slaves - dependent on the Temple, the jubilee - and the "eternal" laws pertaining to Canaanite slaves (*Mishneh Torah, Laws of Slaves*, 5:17).
45. See, for example, the responsa concerning slaves digested in Hagiz, *Leket ha-Kemah*, no. 93a.
46. On the Maduros of Curaçao, see Isaac S. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao: Curaçaoi Jewry 1656-1957* (New York: Bloch Publishing Company, 1957), 209-13. One Samuel Levy Maduro (our author?) served as *hazan* in the early eighteenth century (Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 2:553).
47. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 2:653. The manumission of a young Black slave belonging to Salomon Levy Maduro, Juan Bautista, was sponsored by the free Black Anna Maria (25 May 1747, T. Van der Lee, *Curaçaose Vrijbrieven, 1722-1863* [The Hague: Algemeen Rijksarchief, 1998], 59). The slave's name would seem to preclude a Jewish identity on his part.
48. The situation in the Protestant colonies may have differed from that of the Catholic colonies belonging to France, where Jews lived a tenuous, officially unrecognized existence. In 1764, the governor general of the French Caribbean colonies, Jean Baptiste Charles Henri Hector Comte d'Estaing, wrote to his superior minister, in a letter complaining about their failure to contribute to the upkeep of infrastructure, that the Jews of St. Louis and Les Cayes owned slaves "who become Jewish like them." Without more details it is impossible to know whether this is mere rhetorical posturing, as is probable, or "objective" reporting and, if the latter, just what it means (Arbell, "Jewish Settlements," 306).
49. Richard D. Barnett, "The Correspondence of the Mahamad of the Spanish and Portuguese Congregation of London During the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *TJHSE* 20 (1959/61): 17.

50. Mordechay Alvarez Correa was the leader. From a report by the then-governor, cited by Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:200, n. 79. Ironically, one of Mordechay/Manuel Alvarez Correa's business interests entailed slave trading (Swetschinski, "Conflict and Opportunity," 239).
51. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao*, 81.
52. Wrote the Emmanuels: "One of the peculiarities of this ritual was the frequent blowing of the *Shofar* during the prayer; that held the slaves spellbound" (Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 66, n. 18). I checked Rabbi Semuel Mendes de Sola, *Seder Tefilot le-Sh'elat Matar* [= Order for the Prayers Asking for Rain] (Amsterdam: Janson and Mondovy, 1772), which the Emmanuels mentioned, but saw nothing connected to their comment. Isaac Emmanuel served as Curaçao's rabbi for a time, had access to community archives and no doubt informal paths of local information, so the authors probably voiced here an opinion from within the community.
53. Records of Jurators of Surinam, entry of Tuesday, 15 December 1772, microfilm reel 67, fol. 150, AJA.
54. 13 Nissan 5456 (1696); translated and printed in Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 2:548. Further notice was given "that anyone wishing to buy casser [kosher] fat should not send his slaves for it unless they are accompanied by a Jew."
55. Records of Jurators of Surinam, entry of Tuesday, 13 December 1774, microfilm reel 67, fols. 227-228, AJA.
56. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao*, 126 and plate 71. On the former practice, see Levine Melamed, "Death and Mourning Customs," 158.
57. It is interesting that we have contrasting evidence from a 1723 letter from a Dutch chaplain in India, Jacob Cantor Visscher, who reported that both White and Black Cochini Jews owned slaves who wore *kippot* (cited in Mandelbaum, "Caste and Community," 115).
58. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:79.
59. Böhm, *Sefardies*, 184. The Emmanuels minimized the number of Jewish planters who took advantage of the permits, which came with a steep tax (Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:79).
60. Hartog, *Curaçao*, 149.
61. Jan Jacob Hartsinck, *Beschryving Van Guiana, of de Wilde Kust, in Zuid-America*, 2 vols. (Amsterdam: Gerrit Tielenburg, 1770), 2:898; Goslinga, *Dutch in the Caribbean*, 369.
62. *Recueil der Privelegien Vergunt Aan die Van de Portugeesche Joodsche Natie Inde Colonie Van Suriname* (Surinam, 1746), 4 (tit. 1, no. 1, art. 4). A handwritten copy is in the Surinam Jewish Community Papers, 1746-1968, P-94, Box 2, AJHS. Ph. A. Samson reproduced a slightly different version from a document entitled "Poincten die wij mee te zoeken," which he found in the archive of the Dutch Jewish Community in Surinam (Ph. A. Samson, "Voorrechten Aan de Joden in Suriname Verleend," *WIG*, May 1949, 140). An English translation was printed in Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 192-94, and in Samuel Oppenheim, "Early Jewish Colony," 181-83. The signatories to the petition were David Nassy, Isaak Parera, Isaak Arrias, Henrique Decaseres, Raphael Aboab, Samuel Nassy, Isaac R. de Prado, Aron de Silva, Alonson de Fonseca, Isaak Meza, Daniel Mesiach, Jacob Nunes, Isaac Gabay Sid, Isaac da Costo, Isaac Drago, and Bento d'Acosta.

63. Records of Jurators of Surinam, entry of Monday, 3 October 1774, fols. 223-24, microfilm reel 67, AJA. The case continues through fol. 226.
64. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 237, n. 93.
65. According to his logbooks from the 1760s, Newport merchant Aaron Lopez ensured that the slaves he hired from other owners did not work on Sabbaths or Jewish festivals, which included even minor holidays, such as the fast day of Tisha be-Av and Purim (Snyder, "Sense of Place," 307).
66. Hilfman, "Notes," 197, 199, 201; Böhm, *Sefardies*, 163-64.
67. Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 305, n. 39.
68. Louis, who belonged to Benjamin Moreno Henriques, was manumitted on 24 May 1745, for which process supporting testimony was provided by his father-in-law, Isaac Touro; see Van der Lee, *Curaçaose Vrijbrieven*, 47.
69. J. D. Oppenheim, "Jewish Customs Among the Suriname (Dutch Guyana) Population," *Edot 3* (Palestine Institute of Folklore and Ethnology, 1947/48): 132.
70. Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 159.
71. L. Junker, "Eenige Mededeelingen Over de Saramaccaner-Boschnegers," *WIG* 4, no. 9 (January 1923): 452.
72. H. D. Benjamins, "Treef en Lepra in Suriname," *WIG* 11, no. 5 (September 1929): 187-216; J. D. Oppenheim, "Jewish Customs," 127-30.
73. Personal communication, March 2001.
74. Oppenheim, "Jewish Customs," 129-30. Though balanced, Oppenheim's treatment of Jewish influence on Surinamese Blacks and coloreds comes across as maximalist. Thus, according to him, the eight-day mourning period and celebrations of Blacks "is quite similar to the seven days of mourning observed by the Jews, but Blacks 'is quite similar to the seven days of mourning observed by the Jews, but is mixed with elements of an African cult of the dead' (126). Societies among the colored population, 'organized along the lines of the Jewish burial societies,' follow the Jewish example" (126). In the former case, at least Oppenheim acknowledged the existence of African origins, though in the latter case, a more likely influence might have been the Black confraternities flourishing throughout the Iberian world, which often arranged funerals and burial for members. Though typical of the flawed pseudo-etymological methodologies often used by amateur and professional Jewish scholars alike, tracing influence from "stronger" to "weaker" cultures (in order to bolster or reduce the stature of Jewish culture), Oppenheim's claims beg for vastly more detailed, informed, and nuanced follow-up. Richard Price found Oppenheim "even sillier (more 'maximalist') than [I] make out" (personal communication, March 2001).
75. Oppenheim, "Jewish Customs," 125.
76. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 86-88.
77. Karner, *Sephardim of Curaçao*, 23-24.
78. Nicholas Mirzoeff, "Pissarro's Passage: The Sensation of Caribbean Jewishness in Diaspora," in *Diaspora and Visual Culture: Representing Africans and Jews*, edited by Nicholas Mirzoeff (London: Routledge, 2000), 59. He cited Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Creation of Black America* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), 12. Stuckey referenced a lecture of Robert Farris Thompson on the practice's Kongo origins. I have seen no other mention of this practice among Curacaoan Sephardim, and Mirzoeff's sources do not in fact allude to its occurrence among them.

79. Mörner, *Race Mixture*, 116-17.
80. Brana-Shute, "Manumission in Suriname," 180, 202, 187. She did not compare the manumission rates by Jewish versus non-Jewish owners.
81. *Ibid.*, 33, 340 (Table VII:2).
82. Friedman, *Jews and the American Slave Trade*, 68. He was basically quoting Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 1:79.
83. Joanna Westphal, "Jews in a Colonial Society: The Jewish Community of Barbados, 1654-1833" (unpublished master's thesis, University College, London University, 1993), 52. Due to the hermeneutic pitfalls of statistics, all those I present and discuss are meant to be suggestive, not definitive.
84. Samuel, "Jewish Colonists in Barbados"; Bertram Wallace Korn, "Barbadian Jewish Wills, 1676-1740," in *A Bicentennial Festschrift for Jacob Rader Marcus*, edited by Bertram Wallace Korn (Waltham, MA/New York: American Jewish Historical Society/Ktav, 1976), 303-21.
85. Bowser, "Free Person of Color," 334.
86. Wim Klooster, "Manumission in an Entrepôt: The Case of Curaçao," conference paper, Manumission in the Atlantic World (College of Charleston, Charleston, SC, 2000), 2, 6.
87. Van der Lee, *Curaçao Vrijbrieven*.
88. Of course, the method of counting already involves decision making. In my tally I counted Jews who paid for, i.e., sponsored, the manumissions of slaves belonging to non-Jews, but discounted the slaves of Jews whose manumissions had been paid for by non-Jews. I did not include slaves manumitted by free colored people with Sephardic names, assuming their lack of a Jewish identity.
89. Rambam, *Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Slaves, 6:4; Karo, *Shulkhan Arukh*, Yoreh De'ah, sec. 267:77-78.
90. The title page of Abraham Gabay Yzidro's *Yad Avraham* stated that he served on the *beit din* in Surinam and/or Barbados, though I have seen no corroborating evidence. Like the Sephardic congregation in Amsterdam, Shaar Hashamayim of London offered "similar services" to the colonial communities, including "hearing appeals to its *beit din* from the Jamaican and New York communities" (Evelyn Oliel-Grausz, "A Study in Intercommunal Relations in the Sephardi Diaspora: London and Amsterdam in the Eighteenth Century," in *Dutch Jews as Perceived By Themselves and By Others: Proceedings of the Eighth International Symposium on the History of the Jews in the Netherlands*, edited by Chaya Brasz and Yosef Kaplan [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 2001], 54). I take this to imply that these colonial communities had no *beit din* of their own.
91. This clearly contrasts with the situation in the eastern Mediterranean as described in Chapter 3. Among Cochini Jews as well it appears that slaves were manumitted with a *get*. An eighteenth-century *get* is cited in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 35, n. 224; David Solomon Sassoon, *Ohel David: Descriptive Catalogue of the Hebrew and Samaritan Manuscripts in the Sassoon Library*, London (London: Oxford University Press/H. Milford, 1962), 991 (MS #859 (*get* from 1859 described); Simha Asaf, "Al K'tav-Yad Echad mi-Kojin," *Kiryat Sefer* 13 (1937): 402-4 (the texts of two sample *gets* from Cochini). Rabbi Louis Rabinowitz described two Cochini *gets*, one from 1826 and one from 1835. The former document contained a clause that the sons of

- the liberated slave woman would be counted for a *minyan*, while the latter followed the talmudic formula (Louis Rabinowitz, *Far East Mission* [Johannesburg: Eagle Press, 1952], 110-15). Slaves from Cochini who had (been) converted were not to be sold to a non-Jew (Mandelbaum, "Caste and Community," 115-16). That Cochini slaves were in fact not allowed the rights due to them through these legal mechanisms is a matter for another analysis.
92. Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 162, 305, n. 39. I could not find the crucial document he cited.
93. Brana-Shute, "Manumission in Suriname," 101, 107-11. Later legislation made manumissions increasingly formal, time-consuming, costly, and difficult (116-72).
94. Brana-Shute, "Manumission in Suriname," 108.
95. *Ibid.*, 111. As Brana-Shute showed, worries about the economic self-sufficiency of those to be freed fueled this and later efforts to limit and regulate manumission (118-19).
96. *Ibid.*, 256.
97. Document of 11 March 1711, parish of St. Michael, excerpted in Loker, *Jews in the Caribbean*, 194.
98. Anne then had to serve him for three years as an indentured apprentice, a condition that would expire with his death (Will of Solomon Franco, 30 April 1721, AJA, Jamaica, Wills, 1692-1798, microfilm 140).
99. Brana-Shute, "Manumission in Suriname," 377. In Barbados, however, manumission by means of a last will "was relatively infrequent" (Jerome S. Handler and Arnold A. Sio, "Barbados," in *Neither Slave Nor Free: The Freedmen of African Descent in the Slave Societies of the New World*, edited by David W. Cohen and Jack P. Greene [Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972], 225).
100. Brana-Shute, "Manumission in Suriname," 193.
101. See, for example, the case of Florinda, daughter of the Black Dorothea, belonging to the merchant Gabriel Levy, whose 100 peso payment came from her father, the free Black Francisco (5 November 1722); the manumission of the sambo son of the Black woman Thiene, belonging to Jacob van David Senior, paid for by the free mulatto Claas Senior (28 September 1742); (the same?) Tiene, belonging to David Senior, had her manumission price paid for by the free mulatto Nicolaas Senior (8 May 1744); the mulatta girl Anna Maria, owned by Isaac Levy, whose manumission price came from his other slave Dorothea (30 April 1744); the mulatta Sica, of Abraham Dias Coutino, paid 600 pesos of her own manumission price of 800 pesos (September 1764; Van der Lee, *Curaçao Vrijbrieven*, 22, 35, 42, 119, 121).
102. For example, the free mulatto Bartholomeus Paula sponsored the manumission of the mulatto Claas Senjor (20 February 1742), of the Black Catharina, owned by Catharina per Jan Dam (13 August), and of the Black Maria Catharina, owned by Catharina van der Lijden (15 April 1745; Van der Lee, *Curaçao Vrijbrieven*, 31, 33, 46). Claas Senjor, or Senior, went on to sponsor the manumission of other slaves (see note 101).
103. The sambo Maarta Surinaam had her manumission price paid for by Anthony Urtado (29 October 1743). From her second name the possibility of some connection with the Sephardic community there cannot be dismissed. Abraham Mendes sponsored the manumission of the young Black Louis Bastiaan, who belonged to Catharina Welvaart (22 May 1744); the manumission price for Ephraim Jezurun Henriquez's Black slave

129. Davis, *Problem of Slavery*, 263.
130. Cited in A. Leon Higginbotham, Jr., *In the Matter of Color: Race and the American Legal Process: The Colonial Period* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), 417, n. 69.
131. Charles Leslie, *A New and Exact Account of Jamaica* (Edinburgh: R. Fleming, for A. Kincaid, 1739), 324.
132. Jordan, *White Over Black*, 418, n. 33.
133. "Tombstone Inscriptions in the St. Eustatius Jewish Cemetery, 1700-1825," typescript, SC-13483, AJA; Richard D. Barnett and Philip Wright, *The Jews of Jamaica: Tombstone Inscriptions, 1663-1880*, edited by Oron Yoffe (Jerusalem: Yad Ben Zvi, 1997); Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao*; E. M. Shilstone, *Monumental Inscriptions in the Burial Ground of the Jewish Synagogue at Bridgetown, Barbados* (London, 1956); on New York's Chatham Square cemetery, Rosalie S. Phillips, "A Burial Place for the Jewish Nation Forever," *PAJHS* 18 (1909): 93-122; David de Sola Pool, *Portraits Etched in Stone: Early Jewish Settlers, 1682-1831* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1952).
134. Snyder, "Sense of Place," 328, n. 112.
135. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao*.
136. Rachel Frankel, "Antecedents and Remnants of Jodensavanne: The Synagogues and Cemeteries of the First Permanent Plantation Settlement of New World Jews," in Bernardini and Fiering, *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West*, 409, 413.
137. Irwin Berg, "Among the Dead in Jewish Savannah" (unpublished essay, New York, 2000), 3. This essay was based on a 1999 visit to document the Jewish cemeteries of Jodensavanne led by Rachel Frankel and Aviva Ben-Ur. Robert Cohen mentioned that in November 1780, the *parnasim* established (new?) burial procedures and prices for burial in the cemetery, which seem to have touched on the standing of non-White Jews, but he failed to cite their content (Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 305, n. 39).
138. Rachel Frankel, "Jodensavanne Dig Yields City Design," *Kulanu* 6, no. 3 (Autumn 1999): 5.
139. Samuel, "Jewish Colonists in Barbados," 46.
140. This section was in part inspired by the brilliant effort of Richard D. E. Burton, "Names and Naming in Afro-Caribbean Cultures," *NWIG* 73, no. 1 & 2 (1999): 35-58.
141. Trevor Burnard, "Slave Naming Patterns: Onomastics and the Taxonomy of Race in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica," *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 31, no. 3 (Winter 2001): 328.
142. John Thornton, "Central African Names and African-American Naming Patterns," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d Series, 50, no. 4 (October 1993): 731. Already by the late fifteenth century, the Portuguese had introduced Christianity into central Africa.
143. Thornton, *ibid.*, 730.
144. Cited in Burnard, "Slave Naming Patterns," 328.
145. From Thistlewood's journals, 25 May, 13-14, 28 June 1754; cited in Mullin, *Africa in America*, 86.
146. Emphasis added; Cheryl Ann Cody, "There Was No 'Absalom' on the Ball Plantations: Slave-Naming Practices in the South Carolina Low Country, 1720-1865," *AHR* 92, no. 3 (June 1987): 573. Trevor Burnard agreed that "Africans were more likely to name children after events" (Burnard, "Slave Naming Patterns," 336).

147. I thank Alexander X. Byrd for reminding me of this (personal communication, December, 1998).
148. Cody, "Slave-Naming Practices," 572, n. 15. Many slaves bore a name given according to the day they were born. Day names stemmed from the West African Akan culture - called in the Americas Coromantee (after the Gold Coast port of Koromanti) - and made up some of the most widespread African names: Kofi (Surinam), anglicized as Cuffee; Kodjo or Cujo (Surinam), or in English, Cudjoe; Dosu (Surinam) (see Thornton, "Central African Names," 727-28). Many original tribal names remain in the sources of Jamaica (Mullin, *Africa in America*, 25).
149. Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom, 1750-1925* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1976), xxii, also 93-95.
150. Thornton, basing himself on Cheryl Ann Cody's study and the fairly consistent appearance of namesaking of children after grandparents, agreed with her: "[A]t least these South Carolina slaves not only possessed a culture separate from their masters but also used Kongo or Angolan cultural models for naming" (Thornton, "Central African Names," 742).
151. Cody, "Slave-Naming Practices," 569.
152. *Ibid.*, 575.
153. Thornton, "Central African Names," 742.
154. It must be recalled that most of these slaves were foreign and only recently baptized. For fifteenth-century Genoa, see Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 26-31. For fifteenth-century Valencia, see Blumenthal, "Implements of Labor," 167-72.
155. Mullin, *Africa in America*, 25.
156. Richard Price, ed., *To Slay the Hydra: Dutch Colonial Perspectives on the Saramaka Wars* (Ann Arbor, MI: Karoma Publishers, 1983), 77.
157. For Coquette, ca. 1762, see Gert Oostindie, *Roosburg en Mon Bijou: Tivee Surinamse Plantages, 1720-1870* (Dordrecht: Foris Publications, 1989); on Pussy, owned by Eliza Boilliot, see South Carolina State Archives, Alphabetical file, 0002-001-005a-00054-00, 1824/01/09, Records and documents of the Jews taken from the South Carolina State Archives, folder 3, AJA.
158. All belonged to J. van Sandick. For Samson, one of the more popular slave names in Jamaica, see Burnard, "Slave Naming Patterns," 337 (Table 3); R. Buve, "Surinaanse Slaven en Vrije Negers in Amsterdam Gedurende de Actiende Eeuw," in *Bijdragen Tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*, vol. 119 ("S-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1963), 11. For Abraham and Aron, see Oostindie, *Roosburg en Mon Bijou*, 191, 104.
159. Manumitted by her owner Thomas Trant on 9 July 1783 (Van der Lee, *Curaçaoese Vrijbrieven*, 217).
160. He belonged to Thomas and Elizabeth Coveney and was sold in 1799 (bill of sale, 1799/08/30, South Carolina State Archives, Alphabetical file, 0002-001-003n-00147-00, Records and documents of the Jews taken from the South Carolina State Archives, folder 1, AJA).
161. Thus, a South Carolina man named Thomas Shubrick owned three slaves named Jacob, Sarah, and Abram, who were sold after his death in 1812 (South Carolina State Archives, Alphabetical file, 0002-001-004f-00147-00, 1812/06/04, Records and documents of the Jews taken from the South Carolina State Archives, folder 1, AJA). Among the eighteenth-century slaves born on the Dulles family's Good Hope plantation some

199. 6 November 1760; Van der Lee, *ibid.*, 115.
200. Karner, *Sephardim of Curaçao*, 24.
201. Hartog, *Curaçao*, 183.
202. Johannes was liberated 23 January 1770 (Van der Lee, *Curaçaoe Vrijbrieven*, 138).
203. The latter freed on 20 April 1781 (*ibid.*, 197).
204. Manumitted on 10 October 1786; *ibid.*, 229.
205. Will of Jacob Valverde, 19 April 1725; cited in Samuel, "Jewish Colonists in Barbados," 60–61.
206. Trevor Burnard similarly found that the "taxonomic differences between the naming practices that [White Jamaicans] reserved for themselves and those that they forced on their slaves were both considerable and onomastically different" (Burnard, "Slave Naming Patterns," 326).
207. Again, Burnard found that names given to slaves in Jamaica were "noticeably more distinctive and imaginative" than the "conservative stock of names Whites used for their own children" (*ibid.*, 334).
208. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 2:548.
209. *Ibid.*, 1:66.
210. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 87.
211. Gratz Family Papers, P-8, Box 1, Folder 13, letter IIIh, AJHS. The letter probably dates from the 1760s or later.
212. Lyons Collection, P-15, Box 3, No. 184, AJHS.
213. Records of Jurators of Surinam, entry of Thursday, 12 October 1769, fol. 18, microfilm reel 67, AJA.
214. Records of Jurators of Surinam, entry of Thursday, 22 May 1777, fol. 368, microfilm reel 67, AJA. Coutinho drew a fine of 25 florins, which went to the *sedaka* fund.
215. Stedman, *Narrative*, 1:127.
216. *Ibid.*, 2:28, 127.
217. Snyder, "Sense of Place," 308. I have found no similar scruples mentioned with regard to Caribbean Jewish slave owners.
218. Cited in Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 159.
219. *Pri Ets Hayyim*, 4/5:227a (responsum no. 474).
220. Emmanuel, *Jews of the Netherlands Antilles*, 2:551.
221. "Reducção das Ascamot," Tratado 1, Concernente a obrigação, Liberdade & Prerogativa dos Jehidim & Congreganten, art. 1, microfilm reel 177, AJA, fol. 7ff. The document is dated 17 August 1665 and was drawn up under the British government of Lord Willoughby.
222. My translation; cited in J. Meijer, M.J. Lewenstein's *Opperrabbinaat Te Paramaribo (1857/8–1864): Analyse Van Het Surinaamse Jodendom in Zijn Crisisperiode* (Amsterdam: Uitgeverij de Driehoek, n.d. [1959]), 45; Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 161, 306, n. 40.
223. Cohen, *ibid.*, 161.
224. *Ibid.*
225. *Ibid.*
226. Congregation Mikve Israel, Congregational records, 1672–1817, entry from 5511, SC-13505, AJA.
227. Mentioned in a list of debts owed by the synagogue to Ishak Arrias, 1753, Records of the Portuguese Jewish Community, fol. 177, microfilm reel 180, AJA: "hum Par ditto

- [Engonsos] para a Porta dos Negros." The list seems to differentiate between this entry and "the doors and windows of the kitchen / as Portas y ginelas d cosinha."
228. "Reducção das ascamot," trat. 1, art. 3. = AJA microfilm 177, fol. 7; see also Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 161.
 229. Cohen, *ibid.*, 161. The precedents are discussed in Chapter 8.
 230. "Nao dar dinh° a Interes ■ escravos y a brancos, Negros Livres tomar ■ Interes q a Ley permitir" (Entry of 10 Iyar 5514, "Congregation Mikve Israel, Congregational records, 1672–1817," AJA, SC-13505).
 231. Halakhic authorities traditionally permitted (some even insisted on) the loaning of money to non-Jews at interest; see, for instance, Rambam, *Sefer ha-Mitzvot*, positive commandment #198; Ya'akov b. Yehuda Weil (d. before 1456; Germany), *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot* (Jerusalem, 1959), responsum no. 38; Ibn Zimra, *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot mi-K"Y*, responsum no. 128. Other rabbis encouraged the abandonment of this practice, for example, Shlomo Luria (sixteenth century; Poland), *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot Maharshal* (Lublin [?], 1599), responsum no. 11; Yair Chaim ben Moses Samson Bachrach (1638–1702; Germany), *Sh'elot u-T'shuvot Havot Ya'ir* (Lemberg, 1894), responsum no. 66.
 232. Astonishingly, this connection seems not to have been made by any of the scholars who recounted the history of the colored Jews (Oudschans Dentz, *Kolonisatie; Cohen, Jews in Another Environment*; or Meijer, *Opperrabbinaat Te Paramaribo*, 68, n. 2).
 233. Oudschans Dentz, *Kolonisatie*, 27.
 234. *Ibid.*, 28.
 235. Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 165. Cohen found particularly informative sources for the events of the 1790s, on which he concentrated (163–72).
 236. *Ibid.*, 162. It is possible that mulatto Jews and Black Jews received differing treatment from the Sephardic community in Surinam. Based on the fact that Oudschans Dentz mentioned that the parnasim invited only mulatto and colored Jews to join, Brana-Shute spoke as if the Paramaribo synagogue for *Darhe Jesarim* might have been permitted to host only colored Jews, but not Black Jews (Brana-Shute, "Manumission in Suriname," 255; Oudschans Dentz, *Kolonisatie*, 27). According to Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 163, the further distinctions between peoples of different pigment categories established in the 1787 *ascamot* followed upon a 1781 resolution of the colony's Council of Policy and Criminal Justice distinguishing between the various categories: karboeger (black and mulatto), mulatto (black and white), mestice (white and mulatto), castice (white and mestice).
 237. Oudschans Dentz, *Kolonisatie*, 28.
 238. Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 309, n. 65, citing Adriaan François Lammens, *Bijdragen Tot de Kennis Van de Kolonie Suriname, 1816–1822* (Amsterdam: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, 1982), 171.
 239. Fred. Oudschans Dentz, "Joodse Kleurlingen in Suriname," *WIG* 35 (1955): 234.

Chapter 10

1. Georges-Louis Leclerc, Comte de Buffon, *A Natural History, General and Particular* (1748–1804), excerpted in Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze, ed., *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader* (Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 23.

2. Quoted in Cohen, *French Encounter*, 13; see also Barker, *The African Link*, 84-85. Malpighi had at first believed that all humans were originally white but "that sinners among them had degenerated into black," a theory he later discarded (G. S. Rousseau, "Le Cat and the Physiology of Negroes," in *Racism in the Eighteenth Century*, edited by Harold E. Pagliaro, Proceedings, The American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, vol. 3 [Cleveland, OH: The Press of Case Western Reserve University, 1973], 376-77).
3. Davis, *Problem of Slavery*, 404.
4. Bradley, *The Works of Nature*, 169, cited in Jordan, *White Over Black*, 241.
5. An excellent sampling of such views is brought in Eze, *Race and the Enlightenment*; see also Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*.
6. Arthur Hertzberg, *The French Enlightenment and the Jews* (New York/London and Philadelphia: Columbia University Press and the Jewish Publication Society of America, 1968), 88-89; quotation from Richard Menkis, "Patriarchs and Patricians: The Gradis Family of Eighteenth-Century Bordeaux," in *From East and West: Jews in a Changing Europe, 1750-1870*, edited by Frances Malino and David Sorkin (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1990), 35.
7. Maza, *Servants and Masters*, 7, 9.
8. Lucien Wolf, "The Disraeli Family," *TJHSE* 5 (1902/5): 216.
9. Rachel Daiches-Dubens, "Eighteenth Century Anglo-Jewry in and Around Richmond, Surrey," *TJHSE* 18 (1953/55): 162.
10. Bertram Wallace Korn, *The Early Jews of New Orleans* (Waltham, MA: The American Jewish Historical Society, 1969), 269, 28.
11. Letter from Kjeld O. Ammentorp, with information regarding the Lindo family (among her ancestors), 21 December 1963, SC-7271, AJA.
12. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao*, 325.
13. Cited in Asaf, "Slaves and Slave Trading," 32, n. 216. Asaf was citing *Pri Ets Hayyim*, pt. 3, 148. I studied various editions of these responsa pretty thoroughly and found nothing there corresponding to this, though, of course, I could have missed it.
14. Picart, *Cérémonies et Costumes*, plates ("The Redemption of the First Born" and "The Passover of the Portuguese Jews").
15. *Haggada Shel Pesach, Altona, Ashkenaz*, 1738, written and drawn by Yosef b. David of Leipnik, Rosenthalia Collection, Amsterdam, MS 382 (Altona: W. Turnowsky, 1987), 12b.
16. The "engraving" is actually one of a series of show-boxes or miniature stages, in which drawings executed on different sheets of cardboard were placed one in front of the other to create a three-dimensional scene. The item can be viewed and more information found at the Amsterdam Jewish Historical Museum's website: www.jhm.nl/catalog/.
17. Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans*, 66. The engraving, *The Quarrel With Her Jew Protector*, Plate II (1732), was reproduced in Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans*, 64, and in David Kunzle, *The Early Comic Strip: Narrative Strips and Picture Stories in the European Broadsheet from c. 1450 to 1825* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1973), 304-5. The depicted Jew is said to be based on Jacob Mendes da Costa.
18. The print, "A certain Little fat Jew Macaroni & his Spouse going to ye Pantheon," appeared in David S. Katz, *Jews in England*, Plate 6. For comparison, see the

seventeenth-century portraits reproduced in Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans*, figs. 2-4, and the eighteenth-century portraits printed and discussed in David Dabydeen, *Hogarth's Blacks: Images of Blacks in Eighteenth Century English Art* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 17-40; idem, "The Role of Black People in William Hogarth's Criticism of Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Society," in *Essays on the History of Blacks in Britain: From Roman Times to the Mid-Twentieth Century*, edited by Jagdish S. Gundara and Ian Duffield (Aldershot: Avebury, 1992); Hall, *Things of Darkness*, ch. 5: ("An Object in the Midst of Other Objects": Race, Gender, Material Culture"). An apparent Black lackey greets arriving guests in an engraving by P. Wagenaar, "Gemaskerd Bal, By Geleghenheid van het Joodsche Purim-Feest," 1780, Collection of the Jewish Historical Museum Amsterdam, Inv. no. 1405. An anonymous English print shows an old Jew in a rich salon being introduced to a young "courtesan" by the old "madame" while a Black lackey (belonging to the Jew?) helps seat the young woman next to the Jew. Both the Jew and Black grin excitedly (*One of the Tribe of Levi Going to Brake-fast with a Young Christian* [London, 21 Jan. 1778]). Another English print presents a scene of heretics - a Jew, a Roman Catholic priest, a Turk, another Muslim, and others - dancing convivially to the music piped by a Black devil (Matthew Darley, *The Masquerade Dance* [London, 8 Dec. 1771]). The two last prints can be found in *The Jew as Other: A Century of English Caricature, 1730-1830*, An Exhibition, April 6-July 31, 1995 (New York: Jewish Theological Seminary, 1995).

19. See, for instance, Maza, *Servants and Masters*, 7-14.
20. One example is Gedalia b. Avraham Menahem Tikus, *Hen Tov* (Amsterdam, 1756), which devoted an entire section to men- and maidservants. In his 1692 Spanish compilation of important laws aimed at *Conversos* returning to Judaism, R. Abraham Vaez felt the need to warn readers about some of the dangers posed to the observance of dietary laws by non-Jewish women who served in the household and to urge utmost caution on the part of the householders:

A non-Jewish [serving] girl who put meat in the stew [a typical Shabbat dish] and it is not known whether she rinsed [the meat] or not, if the said girl knows how it is done it is enough to say that she did it. . . . Stews are not to be left under the sole supervision of non-Jewish [serving] women when one goes to synagogue; the Ladies of the house being at home, it is not important because as they come and go [into and out of the kitchen] it is assumed that the said servants will not put in any not kosher thing.

- (Vaez, *Arbol de vidas*, ch. 39 [pp. 151-52].)
21. Abraham David de Leon, *Discurso hecho en la yesiba del Talmud-Tora en Sabat Tesuba*, Año 5525, reprint of Bayone, 1765 ed. (Lisbon: Moses Bensabat Amzalak, 1925), 10.
22. Azulai, *Diaries of Rabbi Azulai*, 259-60.
23. This midrashic phrase derives from contexts in which one's life spirit is taken by the angel of death, or Samael; see, for instance, *Devarim Rabbah* 11:10; *Yalkut Shimoni*, parshat va-Yeleh, sec. 247.
24. Shlomo b. Mas'oud Adhan, *Bi-N'ot Deshe . . . Dinim u-Musar ve-Tohehot ve-Azharot Vidu'im ve-Hanhagot be-Ra'ayot Benurot* (Amsterdam, 1735), 5.
25. *Statuten der Drei Gemeinden*, 1:203 (German trans.), 2:153 (Hebrew). Graupe understood the reference to heretics to mean followers of the messianic pretender Shabtai Tsvi.
26. Dias Brandon, *Orot ha-Mitzvot*, 66b.

27. His biography remains obscure. He received training at the Ets Haim yeshiva, served as rabbi of the Maarssen congregation, and married in 1734 (Silva Rosa, *Geschiedenis*, 82; Melkman, *David Franco Mendes*, 42). A relative (?), Benjamin Dias Brandaõ, was chastised and fined by the Amsterdam mahamad in 1691 for having failed to pay community taxes on a pearl necklace and some diamond jewelry given to his wife (Livro de Memórias, fol. 11, GAA 334, No. 25).
28. Cited in Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the Revolutionary Atlantic* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000), 41.
29. Swetschinski, *Reluctant Cosmopolitans*, 130.
30. Dias Brandon's rather stark differentiation here explains his novel bringing to the surface of the difference between how one should treat a Hebrew slave and a Canaanite slave. Although every commentator agreed that a Hebrew slave should not be made to perform demeaning work and although he was probably aware that, from the Bible on, the same kindness is not mentioned concerning Canaanite slaves, Dias Brandon stated overtly that the purpose of the Canaanite slave is precisely to shoulder the burden of work that one would not assign to a Hebrew slave: "Mitsvah 345: Not to work a Hebrew slave with work that carries great debasement and submission, for the way to work thusly is with a Canaanite slave" (Dias Brandon, *Orot ha-Mitzvot*, 68a).
31. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 98.
32. See, for instance, the discussion of Jamaican Jewish wills mentioning children with slaves in Snyder, "Sense of Place," 304-5. Snyder found the explicit acknowledgment of paternity by these Jewish slave owners extremely rare.
33. Van Lier, *Frontier Society*, 144.
34. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao*, 44.
35. Richard Price, *First-Time: The Historical Vision of an Afro-American People* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983), 133.
36. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao*, 113. Much literature exists on the "Portuguese" Jewish contribution to the dialects formed in these countries by the meetings of European and African and American, but due somewhat to its complexity, the subject stands beyond this study's purview.
37. Günter Böhm, "The First Sephardic Synagogues in South America and in the Caribbean Area," *SR* 22, no. 1 (Spring 1988): 12.
38. Records of Jurators of Surinam, fol. 298, microfilm 67f, AJA. That households contributed "several days work of several of their slaves for the needs and the conveniences of [the] holidays" was stated by Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 100.
39. Cited in Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 161.
40. "... & haverem marcado os mesmos, os Referidos Escravos Com a marca da sedaka B:V:S, & ..." (Records of Jurators of Surinam, entry of Wednesday, 16 October 1776, fol. 336, microfilm reel 67, AJA). The language of the text seems to indicate a practice that was not new.
41. Van Lier, *Frontier Society*, 139.
42. Richard Price, *Alabi's World* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 6-7.
43. Karner, *Sephardim of Curaçao*, 22.
44. *Dagelijks Notulen*, 22 November 1641, cited by José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello, *A Nação judaica do Brasil holandês* (Recife: Revista do Instituto Arqueológico, Histórico e Geográfico Pernambucano, 1976), 283; Böhm, *Sephardes*, 38.

45. Records of Jurators of Surinam, fol. 298, microfilm 67f, AJA.
46. See, for example, Karner, *Sephardim of Curaçao*, 22-23.
47. Meyer Josephson, Letter to Bernard Gratz, 25 July 1775, typed English translation from the Yiddish, SC-5808, AJA.
48. Records of Jurators of Surinam, entry of Tuesday, 17 September 1775, fol. 301, microfilm reel 67, AJA. The situation of Purim, eventually handed over to the *parasha* for punishment, can be followed on fols. 95, 123-24.
49. Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 162.
50. José Antônio Gonsalves de Mello, ed., *Fontes para a história do Brasil holandês*, vol. 1, *A economia açucareira* (Recife: Parque Nacional dos Guararapes/MEC/SPHAN/Fundação Pró-Memória, 1981), 256.
51. Will, Joseph Bueno de Mesquita, 1 November 1708, SC-2782, AJA.
52. Snyder, "Sense of Place," 313-15.
53. Records of Jurators of Surinam, fol. 228, microfilm reel 67a, AJA.
54. Cited in "Notes," *PJHS* 3 (1895): 150, from *Commerciat Colonial Records*, 15:349-50, which I was unable to find.
55. Emmanuel, *Precious Stones of Curaçao*, 118. Ishac Hisquiau Soares (d. 1712) and Sara (da Costa de Andrade) were the couple. The slave was sold in 1759 for a return of 214 pesos and five shillings.
56. "Memoria de las faltas que hizo el Rabi Jahacob Casseres," 28 Elul 5463 [1703], Records of Jurators of Surinam, fol. 295, microfilm reel 67h, AJA.
57. Letter of 24 October 1779 from Providence, Aaron Lopez Papers, P-11, Box 14, AJHS.
58. Letter of 2 August 1684 to "the Vrandones and Levis," Incoming letters of Manuel Levy Duarte, GAA 334, no. 680.
59. Letter of 15 March 1762, Aaron Lopez Papers, P-11, Box 14, AJHS.
60. Undated letter, Gratz Papers, P-8, Box 1, Folder 7, Letter III, AJHS.
61. Letter to the Mahamad of the Spanish and Portuguese Synagogue of London, 3 August 1792, Minute Book of the Mahamad and Adjuntos 1791-1808 (MS 328), Lauderdale Road Synagogue, London; cited in Westphal, "Jews in a Colonial Society," 39.
62. Records of Jurators of Surinam, entry of Monday, 3 January 1775, fol. 236, microfilm reel 67, AJA.
63. Ibid., fols. 237-38.
64. Ibid., entry of Wednesday, 22 March 1775, fol. 245.
65. Cited in Henry Hobhouse, *Seeds of Change: Five Plants That Transformed Mankind* (New York: Harper & Row, 1986), 74.
66. Leslie, *New and Exact Account*, 292.
67. Isidor Paiewonsky, *Eyewitness Accounts of Slavery in the Danish West Indies* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989), 52. Though no specific source was given, the author seems to be citing records of the Danish West Indies and Guinea Company, Danish State Archives, Copenhagen, Denmark.

70. In 1094, an Act was passed by the British Leeward Islands banning Jews from trading with the slaves of inhabitants. It was repealed in 1701 after having been petitioned by Jewish merchants. The Act was reproduced along with its 1701 repeal in Friedenwald, "Material," 100-1. In 1725, a catechist on the Codrington plantation of Barbados lamented that Jews helped slaves "work and merchandise" their own Sunday produce. Harry J. Bennett, *Bondsmen and Bishops: Slavery and Apprenticeship on the Codrington Plantations of Barbados, 1719-1838* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1958), 26. Similarly, Jamaican planter Edward Long complained that Jews monopolized trade with the Blacks because the slave markets operated on Sundays, when Christian merchants could not compete (Edward Long, *The History of Jamaica, or, General Survey of the Antient and Modern State of That Island with Reflections on Its Situation, Settlements, Inhabitants, Climate, Products, Commerce, Laws, and Government*, 3 vols. [London: T. Lownudes, 1774], 2:12). The notion that the commerce of Jews with slaves encouraged the latter to steal in order to have items to sell for cash had already been raised in 1700 by the Jamaican Governor Sir William Beeston (cited in Charles Gross, "Documents from the Public Record Office [London]," *PAJHS* 2 [1894]: 169). For the same reasons, in 1771 a Charleston, South Carolina, grand jury recommended that Jews and others be forbidden from purchasing in their shops goods from "negroes" ("Notes," *PAJHS* 5 [1897]: 222). On Jamaica, see also Long, *History of Jamaica*, 2:29, and Dickson, *Letters in Slavery*, 112, note.
71. Gregorio de Robles, *América a fines del siglo XVII: noticia de los lugares de contrabando*, *Bernal Serie Americanista* (Valladolid: Casa-Museo de Colón / Seminario Americanista de la Universidad, 1980), 32-36.
72. John D. Garrigus, "Blue and Brown: Contraband Indigo and the Rise of a Free Colored Planter Class in French Saint-Domingue," *The Americas* 50, no. 2 (October 1992): 233-63; idem, "The Curaçao Connection: Sephardic Networks and Saint-Domingue," paper delivered at the conference on The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West, John Carter Brown Library (Providence, RI, 1997).
73. Marcus, *Colonial American Jew*, 1:162; based on Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 120.
74. John D. Garrigus, "New Christians/'New Whites': Sephardic Jews, Free People of Color, and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue, 1760-1789," in Bernardini and Fiering, *The Jews and the Expansion of Europe to the West*, 314-32, treats Julien Raimond of St. Domingue.
75. Marcus, *Colonial American Jew*, 1:110.
76. See, for instance, Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans*, ch. 7 ("Tropicalizing the Enlightenment").
77. Abraham de Bargas, *Pensamientos sagrados y educciones morales divididos en dos tratados el primero sobre el pentateuco i el segbre profetas* (Florence: Isac di Moisè de Pas, 1749), 60-61.
78. Ya'akov Emden, *Megilat Sefer*, edited by David Kahana (Warsaw, 1896), 77. David Kaufmann, "Rabbi Zevi Ashkenazi and His Family in London: A Contribution to the History of the German Community in London," *TJHSE* 3 (1896/98): 115, somehow turned this into the West Indies.
79. Kaufmann, "Zevi Ashkenazi," 118.
80. Emden, *Megilat Sefer*, 77-78.

81. Yogev, *Diamonds and Coral*, 69.
82. Azulai, *Diaries of Rabbi Azulai*, 134.
83. David b. Aryeh Leib, *Sharvit ha-Zahav*, commentary to *Sod ha-Shem* (Berlin, 1710), 10b.
84. Huli, *Me'am Lo'ez*, Sh'mot, parshat Yitro, ch. 1 (ad loc. Exod. 18:8).
85. Aravamudan, *Tropicopolitans*, 405, n. 21, citing William Doyle, *The Oxford History of the French Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).
86. Epstein, *Speaking of Slavery*, 50-51.
87. Ha-Cohen, *Ma'ase Tiwya*, 77b.
88. Printed from manuscript by Yitzhak Ben-Zvi, "The Travels of Sason Hai of the House of Castiel" [Hebrew], *Sefimot* 1 (1956): 148.
89. Such as B.T. Sanhedrin 108b; Bereshit Rabbah 36:7; Midrash Tanhuma, parshat Noah, 12, which linked mating dogs with Ham's sexual crime aboard the ark. On the other hand, the animalistic sexual conduct of Blacks comprised a widespread topos of travel literature. Another religiously educated traveler, the pastor Vicente Joachim Soler, noted that in Brazil the "Blacks mix like dogs" ("Brief and Curious Report of Some Peculiarities of Brazil" [1639], in *Dutch Brazil*, Vol. 1: *Documents in the Leiden University Library* [Rio de Janeiro: Editora Index, 1997], 43).
90. Basan was involved in Hebrew literary activities in Amsterdam in the mid- to late eighteenth century. In 1773 he relocated to Hamburg, where he assumed his father's post as rabbi of the Spanish and Portuguese community (*EJ*, s.v. "Bassan, Abraham Hezekiah ben Jacob").
91. Gabay Yzidro, *Yad Avraham*, 4b.
92. Azulai, *Diaries of Rabbi Azulai*, 90.
93. Lampronti (1679-1756; Ferrara) studied medicine at the University of Padua and served important communal functions.
94. Lampronti, *Pahad Yitshak*, pt. 4, 54a.
95. The latter blessing was to be recited only in Israel, a stipulation taken from the *Shulkhan Arukh* (pt. 3 [Orah Hayyim], sec. 225:8) and vastly limiting the applicability of these blessings. Since the *Shulkhan Arukh* linked this blessing for Kushites to the other objects with which it was linked in the talmudic literature (dwarves, albinos, elephants, monkeys, etc.), limiting its recitation to the land of Israel highlighted the abnormality of some of the marvelous *there*, in the echt Jewish land, where the abnormality of the categories could be justifiably argued, and thereby reducing the burden of the constant intrusion of these blessings in other "exotic" lands where such species might abound.
96. See, for instance, Royal Society, *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society of London* (London: Royal Society of London, 1665/66-1886), 19 (1729): 781; 51 (1760): 759; 55 (1764): 45; Hans Sloane, *A Voyage to the Islands Madera, Barbadoes, Nieves, St. Christophers, and Jamaica; with the Natural History of the Herbs and Trees, Four-Footed Beasts, Fishes, Birds, Insects, Reptiles, &c. Of the Last of Those Islands. Etc.*, In Two Volumes (London: Printed for the Author, Vol. I: 1707; Vol. II: 1725), 1:liii; Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis (1698-1759) similarly discussed the destabilizing "racial" implications of albino Blacks in his *Vénus physique* (see Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, 72-73). In 1744 an albino Black child was exhibited in Paris (Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, 105, n. 9).
97. Azulai, *Diaries of Rabbi Azulai*, 228.

121. Perhaps taken from Avraham b. Shmuel Gedalia's *Brit Avraham* (see Chapter 6). The other text to reiterate this midrashic cluster, taking us beyond our purview, is the now canonical Yiddish text by Ya'akov b. Yitzhak of Janowa, the *Tz'ena u-Re'ena*, first printed in Lublin in 1615. I checked only a few early editions, but this text and no doubt these passages in it have their own complex redaction history. The treatment of Ham's curse was completely removed from a 1861 German translation I examined, perhaps a sign of increasing sanitization of overly fantastic material, but this belongs to another, later history (David Schweizer, ed., *Zeehnah Ureehnah, Kommet und Schauet!* [Fürth: S. B. Gusdorfer, 1861]).
122. Huli, *Me'am Lo'ez. Bereshit*, on parshat Lekh L'kha.
123. Nieto, *De la divina providencia*, 6 (first dialogue).
124. Ibid., 64 (second dialogue).
125. Printed in Maurice Woolf, "Joseph Salvador, 1716–1786," *TJHSE* 21 (1962/67): 130.
126. Woolf, "Joseph Salvador," 112. For a brief sketch of Salvador's biography, see Hyamson, *Scphardim*, 117–18.
127. Jacob Rodrigues Moreira, *Kehilath Jahacob: Being a Vocabulary of Words in the Hebrew Language*... (London: A. Alexander, 1773).
128. See Lucette Valensi, "Negre/Negro: Recherches dans les Dictionnaires Français et Anglais Du XVIIème au XIXème Siècles," in *L'Idee de Race dans la Pensée Politique Française Contemporaine*, edited by Pierre Guiral and Émile Temime (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1977), 157–70. English dictionaries before 1800 tended, interestingly enough, to proffer fairly neutral ethnographic definitions.
129. See Schiffman, *Threshold of Modernity*, 3–6; also the excerpts reprinted in Eze, *Race and the Enlightenment*, 10–14, esp. the chart outlining the order Mammalia (13–14).
130. Cited in Hobhouse, *Seeds of Change*, 74. The first edition was Edinburgh, 1768–71. An encyclopedia published in Philadelphia in 1791 defined *Negro* with "idleness, treachery, revenge, debauchery, nastiness, and intemperance" (cited in Shane White, *Somewhat More Independent: The End of Slavery in New York City, 1770–1810* [Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1994], 71).
131. Schiffman, *Threshold of Modernity*, 5.
132. From the "Aprobacion (o sea Cenzura)" to Daniel Israel Lopez Laguna, *Espejo fiel de vidas que contiene los Psalmos de David* (London, 1720). I thank Erich Gruen and Martha Jenks for their help with the Latin. Although none of us could identify the Latin poet cited, the consensus was that it was either a late writer, perhaps Prudentius, or simply bad Latin.
133. Pimentel/De Humanes also wrote a laudatory sonnet to Laguna for the book. His son, Abraham de Jahacob Henriques Pimentel, wrote a "Preface... to the Reader," as well as a sonnet of his own for Laguna, while the latter in turn wrote a sonnet in praise of "his friend Abraham Henriques Pimentel." Finally, Abraham's brother, David Henriquez Pimentel, supplied some of his own good wishes acclaiming the author. None of the members of this family funded Laguna's work, however, as this was done by another supporter, Mordejay Nunes Almeyda.
134. Isaac de Pinto, *Reflexens politicas tocante a constituição da nação judaica; Exposição do estado de suas finanças, causas dos atrasos, e desordens que se experimentaõ, e meyo de os prevenir* (Amsterdam, 1748), 19, 21–22.

135. Pinto, *ibid.*, 22.
136. On De Pinto's intellectual and social ambit, see Adam Sutcliffe, "Can a Jew Be a Philosopher? Isaac de Pinto, Voltaire, and Jewish Participation in the European Enlightenment," *Jewish Social Studies* 6, no. 3 (Spring/Summer 2000): 31–51. In a 1686 travel report from Africa, the Frenchman O. Dapper mentioned jealousy as one of the "vices" of overly sensual Blacks (cited in Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, 49).
137. It is not unlikely that De Pinto wrote this pamphlet with an eye to his becoming as well a director of the WIC, which occurred in 1749.
138. *Sefer Ha-Kuzari*, accompanied by the commentary of Yitshak ha-Levi Satanov (b. Moshe) (Berlin: Gedruckt in der orientalischen Frenschule, 1795), 2b.
139. See Cohen, *French Encounter*, 130–42; Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, chs. 4–5. Even Johann Gottfried von Herder argued in 1785 that Blacks were Europeans' brothers: "Them you should not subjugate, not murder them, not steal from them, because they are human beings like you" (translated in Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, 161).
140. See, for example, Barker, *The African Link*; J. William Frost, ed., *The Quaker Origins of Antislavery* (Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions, 1980); Clare Midgley, *Women Against Slavery: The British Campaigns, 1780–1870* (London: Routledge, 1992), ch. 2; Marcel Dorigny and Bernard Gainot, *La Société des Amis des Noirs, 1788–1799: Contribution à l'histoire de l'abolition de l'esclavage* (Mayenne: Éditions Unesco, 1998).
141. See the references given in Chapter 9.
142. Frankel, "Jodensavanne Dig," 13. The deceased were Emanuel, son of Aron Pereyra, and David Rodrigues Monsanto, respectively.
143. Andrée Aelion Brooks, "A Jungle Journey," *Reform Judaism* 27, no. 3 (Spring 1999): 61. Brooks did not name the buried leader.
144. Samuel Oppenheim, "The Chapters of Isaac the Scribe: A Bibliographic Rarity, New York, 1772," *PAJHS* 22 (1914): 44.
145. Zvi Loker and Robert Cohen, "An Eighteenth-Century Prayer of the Jews of Surinam," in *The Jewish Nation in Surinam: Historical Essays*, edited by Robert Cohen (Amsterdam: S. Emmering, 1982), 75. The cantor's tombstone gives his name as David Hezekiah Baruch Luzado (cited in Hilfman, "Notes," 182).
146. Loker and Cohen, "Eighteenth-Century Prayer," 76.
147. Ibid.
148. Ibid., 78, 81–82. The version of Loker and Cohen conforms to the handwritten Hebrew copy in the Lyons Collection, P-15, Box 3, item no. 205, AJHS.
149. On the *hazan*, see Loker and Cohen, "Eighteenth-Century Prayer," 75. In 1738 his grandfather (?), David Baruh Louzado, Senior, corresponded with the management of his parnasim from his residence in Barbados in order to arrange the management of his plantation, slaves, and accounts, inherited after the death of his cousin in Surinam (Letter of 22 December 1738, Records of Jurators of Surinam, fols. 61–62, microfilm reel 67h, AJA). Another (?) David Baruh Louzado had resided on Barbados since at least 1681, when his name appeared on a petition to the English king (N. Darnell Davis, "Notes," 131). The year previous, 1680, an Aron Baruk Loisado of the same island contributed 792 pounds of sugar – the third highest amount of any contributor – toward an 8,500-pound levy on the Jews for the repairing of the roads of the parish of St. Michael (N. Darnell Davis, "Additional Notes

- on the History of the Jews of Barbados: Extracts from the Minutes of the Vestry of St. Michael's Parish," *PAJHS* 19 [1910]: 174-75). On the family, see Hyamson, *Sephardim*, 27.
150. [Joshua Hezekiah DeCordova], *אמונה ואסתר Reason and Faith, or Philosophical Absurdities, and the Necessity of Revelation. Intended to Promote Faith Among Infidels, and the Unbounded Exercise of Humanity Among All Religious Men. By One of the Sons of Abraham to His Brethren* (Philadelphia: F. Bailey, 1791), 114. This work was published originally in Jamaica, anonymously, in 1788, funded by thirty-four Jewish subscribers, thirty-three from Jamaica and one from Curaçao (Bertram Wallace Korn, "The Haham DeCordova of Jamaica," *American Jewish Archives* 18, no. 2 [November 1966]: 142). Korn first identified the name of the author in this 1966 article.
 151. Von Pufendorf, *De Jure Naturae et Gentium*, bk. 2, ch. 3, no. 8. I could find nothing by ■ Thomas Cornely.
 152. *Geography for Youth, or, a Plain and Easy Introduction to the Science of Geography, for the Use of Young Gentlemen and Ladies*, 3rd ed. ([London?], 1787), 165; cited in Barker, *The African Link*, 192. See also the comments of Christopher Meiners and Friedrich von Schiller cited in Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, 221, 224.
 153. Korn, "Haham DeCordova," 148-49.
 154. Andrade, *Jews in Jamaica*, 43. The patent included ■ proviso about maintaining a proportionate number of White men to slaves. One cannot prove from the patent itself, however, that DeCordova or his family ever operated a plantation there.
 155. Korn, "Haham DeCordova," 148, 148, n. 20; *The Royal Gazette*, 15 December 1792.
 156. Korn, "Haham DeCordova," 150.
 157. I cannot enter here into the question of the authorship and production of the text. The *Historical Essay* itself presented enough documentary material to reconstruct its production, and no doubt the principal author was Sephardic planter-physician David de Israel Cohen Nassy, of the colony's perhaps most prominent family (see, for example, Bijlsma, "David Nassy").
 158. This and all further page references are to Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*.
 159. And see the Prospectus for the planned college, Docendo Docemur (Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 213-18 [doc. 21]).
 160. The same theme was raised elsewhere (108).
 161. Emphasis added; "Review, *Geschiedenis der Kolonie Van Suriname, &c. . . Amsterdam, 1791*," *The Monthly Review* (1792), ser. 2, 7: 496.
 162. Soon after, readers were told that the government in Surinam "is chosen from among the inhabitants . . . without distinction as to religion or color" (137).
 163. Such a stance makes logical David Nassy's role a few years later in suppressing the colored society *Darhe Jesarim*, discussed in Chapter 9 (Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 165).
 164. For a comparison of the place of non-Whites in the *Historical Essay* with another Surinamese literary product, Pieter van Dyk's *The Life and Business of a Surinamese Plantation Manager, With the Slaves, on a Coffee Plantation* (ca. 1765), see Laura Lafrado, "Constructing the Subaltern: White Creole Culture and Raced Captivity in Eighteenth-Century Dutch Suriname," *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 30 (2001): 31-48.
 165. Quoted in Judah, "Jews' Tribute," 154-55.

166. Pinto, *Reflexoens politicas*. See also Jonathan M. Hess, "Sugar Island Jews? Jewish Colonialism and the Rhetoric of 'Civic Improvement' in Eighteenth-Century Germany," *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 32, no. 1 (1998): 92-100. French historian H. Ternaux-Compans turned to the prosperity of the short-lived Jewish settlement on Cayenne as proof that "the Jews are not so unfit, as has been believed, for agricultural enterprises." See H. Ternaux-Compans, *Notice Historique sur la Guyane française* (Paris, 1843), 66; translated in Oppenheim, "Early Jewish Colony," 123.
167. Marcus and Chyet, *Historical Essay on Surinam*, 67. According to Albert M. Hyamson, Belmonte was the sister of poet Daniel Israel Lopez Laguna (Hyamson, *Sephardim*, 111). I have no idea whether this poem remains extant; despite much effort, I have not yet been able to locate it.
168. Isaac da Costa, "The Jews of Spain and Portugal," originally bk. 3 of Da Costa, *Israel and the Gentiles* (N.p.: James Nisbet & Co., 1850), translated by Mary Kennedy in *Noble Families Among the Sephardic Jews*, edited by Bertram Brewster (Oxford: Oxford University Press/Humphrey Milford, 1936), 100.
169. *Pri Ets Hayyim*, 4/5:227a (responsum no. 474). Later rabbis also rendered the laws of slavery ■ thing of the past. The Ashkenazic commentator on the Shulkhan Arukh, Yehiel Michal b. Aharon ha-Levi Epstein (1828-1908; born Bobruisk, Belorussia), began his *Anikh ha-Shulkhan's* section on slavery with a superscript stating: "The laws of slavery in ancient times, but now the law of slaves ■ completely inoperative, for there are no slaves by us" (Yehiel Michal b. Aharon ha-Levi Epstein, *Anikh ha-Shulkhan al Hilkhot Nidah ve-Mikva'ot* [Tel Aviv, n.d.], 100 [sec. 267]).
170. Ya'akov Avraham of Cracow, *Nahalat Ya'akov* (Amsterdam: Moshe Frankfort Dayan, 1724), 10b. The author stated that he lost the citation for this "surprising utterance that I heard from the great sages of the day."
171. Although Rambam might have objected to the sheer numbers involved, having noted that "everyone who multiplies [the number of his or her] slaves day in and day out ■dds sin and iniquity to the world" (*Mishneh Torah*, Laws of Gifts to the Poor, 10:17). But this was ■ moral exhortation, not a negative commandment.
172. Marcus, *Colonial American Jew*, 1:164; Bloom, *Economic Activities*, 161.
173. Marcus, *Colonial American Jew*, 1:130.
174. Menkis, "Patriarchs and Patricians: The Gradis Family of Eighteenth-Century Bordeaux," 26.
175. *Ibid.*, 26, n. 43.
176. Bodian, *Hebrews of the Portuguese Nation*, 111.
177. Cohen, *Jews in Another Environment*, 168.
178. Gabriel Debien and P. Pluchon, "Un Plan d'Invasion de la Jamaïque en 1799 et la Politique Anglo-Américaine de Toussaint Louverture," *Quarterly of the Haitian Historical Society* 119 (July 1978); Zvi Loker, "An Eighteenth-Century Plan to Invade Jamaica: Society 119 (July 1978); Isaac Yeshurun Sasportas - French Patriot or Jewish Radical Idealist?" *TJHSE* 28 & Miscellanies Pt. 13 (1981/82): 132-44.
179. Westphal, "Jews in a Colonial Society," *PAJHS* 13 (1905): 95.
180. Max J. Kohler, "Judah Touro, Merchant and Philanthropist," *PAJHS* 13 (1905): 95.
181. Letter of 26 April 1715, SC-2902, AJA.
182. For a treatment of this passage in the context of Dickinson's evolving views, see Darold D. Wax, "Quaker Merchants and the Slave Trade in Colonial Pennsylvania,"

- Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography* 86, no. 2 (April 1962): 151 and passim. On early Quaker abolitionism, see also Midgley, *Women Against Slavery*, esp. 14-40; Frost, *Quaker Origins of Antislavery*.
183. Leland J. Bellot, "Evangelicals and the Defense of Slavery in Britain's Old Colonial Empire," *Journal of Southern History* 37, no. 1 (February 1971): 29.
 184. One has the earlier example of convert Paul Israel from Aleppo, who founded a college for slaves in Naples in 1726. Paul Israel had joined the local Augustinian monastery and personally baptised 295 slaves (Hans Werner Debrunner, *Presence and Prestige: Africans in Europe: A History of Africans in Europe Before 1918* [Basle: Basler Afrika Bibliographien, 1979], 88).
 185. Excerpts from the accounts and proceedings of the Trustees of Georgia, whereby Joseph Ottolenghe (convert from Judaism) was selected as a catechist for instructing Georgia negroes in Christian Religion, 21 March, 1750, SC-9364, AJA; taken from *Accounts & Proceedings of the Trustees [of Georgia] for the General Meeting*, 21 March 1750, in *The Colonial Records of the State of Georgia*, 40 vols., edited by Allen D. Candler (Atlanta: Franklin Printing and Publ. Co., 1904), 33:489.
 186. Joseph Ottolenghe, Letters, 1751-61, SC-9366, AJA.
 187. Andrade, *Jews in Jamaica*, 151.
 188. Henrique Alves, Antônio Brasio, and Agostinho de Moura, *Um judeu... salvador da raça preta* (Viana do Castelo: Edição de "Entre Nos," 1939). This treatment contains an unfortunate anti-Jewish spirit. In 1848, Libermann's institute merged with a French seminary devoted to missionizing in the former French colonies to become the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and of the Immaculate Heart of Mary.
 189. Albert M. Hyamson, "An Anglo-Jewish Family," *TJHSE* 17 (1951/52): 8.
 190. Chris Monaco, "Moses E. Levy of Florida: A Jewish Abolitionist Abroad," *AJH* 86, no. 4 (December 1998): 377-96; idem, "A Sugar Utopia on the Florida Frontier: Moses Elias Levy's Pilgrimage Plantation," *Southern Jewish History* 5(2002): 103-40. Levy's tract has been reprinted; see Moses Elias Levy, *A Plan for the Abolition of Slavery*, edited with an introduction by Chris Monaco (Micanopy, FL: Wacahoota Press, 1999).
 191. See Seymour Drescher, *From Slavery to Freedom: Comparative Studies in the Rise and Fall of Atlantic Slavery* (New York: New York University Press, 1999), 1-272.
 192. John D. Garrigus, "'New Christians' 'New Whites': Sephardic Jews, Free People of Color, and Citizenship in Saint-Domingue, 1760-1789" (unpublished revised paper Jacksonville, 1998), 28. He cited Gabriel Debien, *Gens de Couleur Libres et Colons de Saint-Domingue Devant la Constituante, 1789-Mars 1790*, Notes D'histoire Coloniale, vol. 18 (Montreal: Revue d'Histoire de l'Amérique Française, 1951), 26.
 193. See, for example, Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, chs. 2-4; Jordan, *White Over Black*, chs. 6, 13; Cohen, *French Encounter*, ch. 3; Blakely, *Blacks in the Dutch World*, 171-88. According to Robin Hallet, the number of books about Africa published between 1700 and 1750 was some four times greater than the number published during the whole of the seventeenth century (cited in Wheeler, *Complexion of Race*, 94).
 194. I. M. Belisario, *Sketches of Character, in Illustration of the Habits, Occupation, and Costume of the Negro Population, in the Island of Jamaica, Drawn After Nature, and in Lithography* (Published by the Artist, at his Residence, No. 21, King-Street, Kingston, Jamaica: Printed by J. R. De Cordova, at the Gleaner's Office, No. 36 Harbour-Street, 1837[-1838]). I thank Gloria Mound and Jackie Ranston for alerting me to this item and

its whereabouts. I hope to publish a study of this work and its context in the near future.

195. Shimshon ha-Levi Bloch, *Sh'vilei Olam: Sefer Kolel T'chumot k'el Artsot Tevel* (Zolkiew: Ben Meyerhoffer, 1822-28), 2:1.
196. Translated from *Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache* (Berlin, 1772), 193, in Tiainen-Anttila, *Problem of Humanity*, 108.

(In)Conclusion

1. Hayden White, *Metalhistory: The Historical Imagination in Nineteenth-Century Europe* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1973), 8.
2. *Ibid.*, xii.
3. Robbins, *Servant's Hand*, 205-6.
4. Yerushalmi, *Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto*, 44.
5. Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress*, xvii.
6. As it did for the Dutch, English, and French in general. The importance of imitation exists here whether or not Jews constituted the actual link (Curtin, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 51; Schwartz, *Slaves, Peasants and Rebels*, 40, 55, n. 5). Almost all Jewish scholars accepted and touted the Jewish contributions to early Caribbean sugar production and continue to do so. See, for example, Marcus, *Colonial American Jew*, 1:113-14.
7. Yerushalmi, "Between Amsterdam and New Amsterdam," 192.
8. Cecil Roth, *The Jews in the Renaissance* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1964), xii.
9. Paul Van Gelder, "Review, *Het Paradijs Overzee: De 'Nederlandse' Caraïben en Nederland*," *NWTG* 73, no. 1 & 2 (1999): 172.
10. As noted already concerning a narrower field of inquiry by Robert Cohen, "Early Caribbean Jewry: A Demographic Perspective," *Jewish Social Studies* 45, no. 2 (Spring 1983): 131.
11. Robert Cohen, "Patterns of Marriage and Remarriage Among the Sephardi Jews of Surinam, 1788-1818," in *The Jewish Nation in Surinam: Historical Essays*, edited by R. Cohen (Amsterdam: S. Emmerring, 1982), 97.
12. See Mullin, *Africa in America*, 23 and following.
13. Cohen, "Early Caribbean Jewry," 131.
14. This is the concluding argument of Daniel Boyarin, *A Radical Jew: Paul and the Politics of Identity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994).
15. Bryan Edwards, Esq., *The History, Civil and Commercial, of the British Colonies in the West Indies*, 2d edition, 2 vols. (London: Printed for John Stockdale, Piccadilly, 1793), 2:27; "Code Noir."
16. Price, *Alabi's World*; idem, *First-Time*; idem, *Guiana Maroons*; also idem, *To Slay the Hydra*.
17. For instance, the near-universal acceptance of Christianity among (ex-)slaves or, on another level, the way Curacaoan slave women adopted the European child-nursing practices of their mistresses, shorter birth intervals, and shorter lactation periods (Humphrey E. Lamur, "Demographic Performance of Two Slave Populations of the Dutch Speaking Caribbean," in *Caribbean Slave Society and Economy: A Student Reader*, edited by Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd [New York: New Press, 1991], 217).
18. Robbins, *Servant's Hand*, 218.

19. See, for instance, Boxer, *Church Militant*, 30-38 ("The Church and Negro Slavery"); N. Cushner, "Slave Mortality and Reproduction on Jesuit Haciendas in Colonial Peru," *HAHR* 55 (1975): 177-99; Vincent Franklin, "Alonso de Sandoval and the Jesuit Conception of the Negro," *Journal of Negro History* 58, no. 3 (1973): 349-60; Stuart B. Schwartz, "The Plantations of St. Benedict: The Benedictine Sugar Mills of Colonial Brazil," *The Americas* 39, no. 1 (July 1982): 55-86; Venatius Willeke, "Kirche und Negersklaven in Brasilien, 1550-1888," *Neue Zeitschrift Für Missionswissenschaft* 32 (1976): 15-26; Van der Linde, *Surinaamse Suikerheren*; Bellot, "Evangelicals"; Wax, "Quaker Merchants." On some Barbadian plantations owned and operated by the Church of England's Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, see Klingberg, *Codrington Chronicle*; Bennett, *Bondsmen and Bishops*.
20. Translated in Oppenheim, "Early Jewish Colony," 132.
21. For instance in 1686, when the Holy Office in Rome "briefly endorsed" ■ condemnation of the Atlantic slave trade (Blackburn, *Making of New World Slavery*, 330). On the papacy and slavery, see J. Margraf, *Kirche und Sklaverei Seit der Entdeckung Amerikas oder: Was Hat die Katholische Kirche Seit der Entdeckung Amerika's Theils Zur Mildnerung Theils Zur Aufhebung der Sklaverei Gethan* (Tubingen, 1865), who reproduced many of the relevant papal documents; Rayford W. Logan, "The Attitude of the Church and Slavery Prior to 1500," *Journal of Negro History* 17 (1932): 466-80; Boxer, *Church Militant*, 30-38; Saez, *Iglesia y el negro*, 24-25.
22. Davis, *Slavery and Human Progress*, 70.
23. Böhm, *Sefardies*, 190.
24. Todd M. Endelman, *Radical Assimilation in English Jewish History, 1656-1945* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 4.
25. Kaplan, "Portuguese Community," 178.
26. Such as Erving Goffman, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (New York: Anchor Books, 1959); Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity* (London: Routledge, 1996), esp. ch. 6 ("Social Selves"); Stuart Hall, for instance as quoted in Laurence J. Silberstein, "Mapping, Not Tracing: Open Reflection," in *Mapping Jewish Identities* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 4.
27. Akeel Bilgrami, "What Is a Muslim? Fundamental Commitment and Cultural Identity," in *Identities*, edited by Anthony K. Appiah and Henry Louis Gates (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995), 199.
28. Didier Eribon, *Conversations with Claude Lévi-Strauss*, translated by Paula Wissing (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 152.
29. Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 119.
30. Lewis R. Gordon, *Existential Africana: Understanding Africana Existential Thought* (New York: Routledge, 2000), 5, who wielded the phrase regarding Franz Fanon.
31. Sherry Ortner, "Resistance and the Problem of Ethnographic Refusal," in *The Historic Turn in the Human Sciences*, ed. Terrence J. McDonald (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1996), 179.

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Index

- Aaron, 103-4, 106, 107, 108, 109, 114
 Aaron ha-Cohen, 271
 abolition, 287-93
 Abrabanel, Mosseh, 177
 Abraha (King of Ethiopia), 27
 Abraham, 48, 90
 Abraham David de Leon, Rabbi, 259
 Abraham de Bargas, Rabbi, 267
 Abraham Gabay Yzidro, Rabbi, 236, 270, 292
 Abraham ibn Ezra, 37, 117
 Abrahams, Abraham I., 224
 Abrahams, Israel, 77, 169
 Abravanel, Judah, 39
 Abravanel, Samuel, 39
 Abravanel, Yitshak, 17-21, 24, 31, 39, 64, 102, 133, 160, 299
 Aristotle and, 22
 on Blacks, 36-38, 42-43, 49, 354n126
 contemporaries of, 40, 42
 and curse of Ham, 19, 20, 22
 and Ham, 28, 29, 35-36
 humoral theory and, 24-26
 and Japhet, 48
 and King Afonso V, 47
 and Kush, 36
 and Kushites, 17-20
 and Noah's sons, 18, 21-22, 143
 positions of, 40-41
 on slavery, 42
 social class of, 43, 46, 360n194
 theories of race and, 21-25
 travel literature and, 42-43, 358n171
 Abravanel, Yosef, 39
 absorption, of slaves, 161
 Amsterdam laws on, 175-76
 and circumcision, 174
 debate over, 197
 haskamot on, 171
 and ritual immersion, 174
 in Western Sephardic communities, 175-79
 Abu-Ga'far Muhammad ben Garir Tabari, 32
 Abulense, El. See Madrigal, Alfonso de (Bishop of Avila)
Acts of Peter, 139
 Adam and Eve, 134
 Addison, Lancelot, 186
 Afonso V (King of Portugal), 43, 44, 45
 Yitshak Abravanel and, 47
 Africa, 117, 119, 120, 121, 122, 345n.2
 Yitshak Abravanel and, 18
 African names, slaves given, 239-40, 458n148
 African slave trade, and Dutch colonies, 199
 aggada, 337
 Aguilar, Abraham de, 265
 Aharon. See Aaron
 Aharon Perahya ha-Cohen, Rabbi, 66
Akeidat Yitshak, 142
 Akiva, Rabbi, 75-76
 Aldrete, Bernardo José, 159, 187
 Alemanno, Yohanan, 206
 Alexander of Tralles, 26
 Alfalas, Moshe, 130, 131
 Alfieri, Vittorio, 269
 Alfonso X (King of Spain), 19, 33, 50
 Almada, André Alvares de, 120
 Alvarez, Moshe, 84
 American colonies. See also colonies
 burial practices in, 237
 circumcision practices in, 224-25
 dependence on slavery in, 254

- American colonies (*cont.*)
 exclusion of Blacks in, 203-4
 Jews in, on abolition, 291
 religiosity of owners in, 249
- Amsterdam
 absorption of slaves in, 175-76
 circumcision practices in
 of Blacks and mulattos, 175
 laws on, 171-72
 registers of, 177-78
 of slaves, discourse on, 174-75
 and colonialism, 198-204
 criminal activity in, 96-97
 exclusionary practices in, 192-98,
 195-96
 leaders of, 200-201
 Ouderkerk Cemetery in, 97-101
 Sephardic Jews in, 6
sistema de castas in, 201-2
 slaveholding in, 93-101
- Anacletus II (pope), 180
- ancestry, Jewish, depictions of, 182-83
- Antiquities of the Jews*, 103
- Aquinas, Thomas, 22, 23, 24, 34, 126,
 348n32
- Araújo, Baltasar de, 91-92
- Arba'ah Turim* (The Four Columns), 63,
 76
- Aretaeus of Cappadocia, 25
- Ariosto, Ludovico, 116, 182
- Aristotle, 21, 22, 25, 142, 347n25
- Arroyo, Gaspar Medez del, *alias* Abraham
 Ydaña, 56
- Asaf, Simha, 71, 77, 78, 172
- Ashkenazic discourse
 on Blackness, 272
 on curse of Ham, 274
- Ashkenazic Jews, 5
- Ashtor, Eliahu, 74
- Asquenasi, Moseh, 212
- astronomy, 411n98
- Atkins, John, 163
- Atlas of the European Novel*, 135
- Augustine, Saint, 24, 106, 148
- autoethnography, Jewish, 179-91
- Avraham ben David, Rabbi (Rabad), 172,
 173
- Avraham ben Eliezer ha-Levi, Rabbi, 73
- Avraham ben Meir ibn Ezra, 34-35
- Avraham ben Shmuel Gedalia, 144-45
- Avraham ben Shmuel Meyuhas, 65
- Avraham ben Yehuda Hazan, 123
- Avraham de Botton, Rabbi, 86
- Avraham ibn Migash, Rabbi, 126
- Avraham of Perusha, Rabbi (of Italy),
 184
- Avraham Yehezkiyah ben Ya'akov Bassan,
 270
- Avshalom, 131
- Azavedo, Moses de, 225
- Bacon, Francis, 138-39
- Bakhtin, M. M., 48
- Balboa, Miguel Cabello de, 122, 152
- Baldaeus, 206
- Bandello, Matteo, 129
- Banton, Michael, 167
- baptism, of slaves, 197
- Barbados
 circumcision practices in, 225
 manumission in, 236-37
 religious life of slaves in, 217-18
 slave names in (seventeenth and
 eighteenth centuries), 305-6
- Barbosa, Duarte, 206
- Bargas, Abraham de, Rabbi, 276
- Bar-Giora, Naphtali, 211
- Barhebraeus, Gregorius (Gregory Abu'l
 Faraj), 32
- Barrios, Daniel Levi (Miguel) de, 119,
 187
- Basile, Giambattista, 165
- Battell, Andrew, 120
- beit din, 232, 337
- Belilho, Venbeniste Hain, 212
- Belisario, Isaac Mendes, 292
- Belleforest, François, 148
- Belmonte, Jacob Israel. *See* Querido, Diego
 Dias
- Beltrán, Gonzalo Aguirre, 133
- Benjamin of Tudela, 118, 128, 205
- Berehya Baruh ben Yitshak Izak Shapira,
 Rabbi, 191
- Berlin, Ira, 241
- Bermudas Company, 150
- Bernardete, Mair Jose, 68
- Bernier, François, 163
- Bernstein, Michael, 12
- Bertinoro, Ovadia da, 184
- Best, George, 151, 157
- Bet Haim. *See* Ouderkerk Sephardic
 cemetery
- The Bible, on circumcision of slaves, 75,
 378n24
- Biblical names, slaves given, 240
- Bilgrami, Akeel, 302
- Binyamin Rafael Dias Brandon, Rabbi,
 260, 261
- Bishop, Samuel, 265
- Black, William, 180
- Blackburn, Robin, 62, 144, 146, 168, 213
- Black Cafris, 182

- blackness, Jewish, 179-91
 Cochit Jews and, 204
 and curse of Ham, 28-35, 143-45
 denigration of, 187-88
 early modern Europeans on, 180-83
 and humoral theory, 25-27
 implications of, 168
 Jewish perception of, 183-89
 and Kushite wife of Moses, 102-15
 medieval views on, 38
 and melancholia, 25-27
 negative evaluations of, 272-74
 and skin color, 122-24
 Yitshak Abravanel and, 28
- Blacks. *See also* blackness, Jewish; Kushites;
 slaves
 in Amsterdam, 93-101
 burial practices for
 Christian, 194
 racially segregated, 193-95, 237-38
 characteristics of, 30, 35
 circumcision of, opposition to, 175, 196
 converting to Judaism, 300, 303
 discourse on
 European Jewish, 267-80
 Jewish, 17, 36, 102, 116, 164-65, 292,
 296, 297, 299
 free, manumitting slaves, 233-34. *See also*
 abolition; manumission
 halakha on excluding, 252
 identity as, 266-67
 Jews with, 204-5, 206
 meaning of, 169
 language describing, 278-79
 linkage with demons, 35-36, 132-33
 as merchandise, 265-66
 ordinances excluding, 203-4
 as pagans, 118-19, 153
 parallels between Jews and, 125-27
 perceptions of
 Christian, 35
 eighteenth-century, 254-93
 ethnographic, 117-18
 European, 22, 38, 186, 213
 Iberian, 41-44
 religious education of, 197-98
 and sexuality, 36-37, 125
 as sorcerers, 119-22
 Yitshak Abravanel and, 36
- Blakely, Allison, 195
- The Blessing of Japheth, proving the Gathering
 of Gentiles*, 157
- blissing of slaves, upon purchase of, 153-55
- bloodletting, from fingers, 121, 397n35
- Bloom, Herbert I., 264
- Blount, Henry, 186
- Blümenbach, Johann Friedrich, 167
- Bodian, Miriam, 178, 185, 215, 289
- Bodin, Jean, 122, 132
- Böhm, Günter, 3
- Bomrey, Isak de Mercado, 236
- Boston, burial practices in, 237
- Bowser, Frederick P., 186, 231
- Boxer, C. R., 4, 41, 44, 199
- Boxman, Bradd, 224
- Boyarín, Daniel, 29, 391n16
- Brackman, Harold, 3, 184
- Bradley, Richard, 255
- Brahe, Tycho, 411n98
- Brana-Shute, Rosemary, 7, 218, 223, 231,
 232, 233, 234, 236
- Brandão, Fernandes Ambrósio, 157
- Brant Shipgel*, 67
- Braude, Benjamin, 139, 144
- Braunschweig, Herzog von (Prince), 93
- Bravo, Alexandre, 290
- Brazil (Dutch), 295
 circumcision practices in, 176, 219-26
 conversion practices in, 219-22, 219-26
 Portuguese reclaiming of, 221
 religious life of slaves in, 217-18
 slaveholding practices in, 219-20
 sugar plantations in, 59-60, 368n84,
 368n85
- Brereton, Sir William, 180
- Breviarium historie catholice*, 147
- Broda, Avraham, 274
- Broen, Hendrik, 189
- Brun, Samuel, 120
- Budomil, Kingdom of, 117
- burials, of Blacks and slaves, 178, 217
 Christian, 193-95
 in Curaçao, 237, 238
 in Lisbon, 194
 Protestant, 195
 records of, 97-101
 segregated, 196, 237-38
 in Amsterdam, 192-93
 history of, 193-95
- Burke, Peter, 4
- Burnard, Trevor, 238
- Burton, Richard, 241
- Cafris, Black, 182
- Calderón, Bishop Vara, 203-4
- Cam. *See* Ham
- Canaan, 22, 33, 34
 and curse of Ham, 19, 20, 31-34
 slaves from, 63-66, 75, 79
- Canaanites, 205, 249-50
- Canaanite slave laws, 63-64, 225-26,
 450n44

- Canary Islands, 153, 412n107
 Capsali, Eliahu, 127, 185
 Cardoso, Ishac, 174, 186, 187, 427n111
 Careri, John Francis Gemelli, 186
 Caribbean, Jewish community in. *See also*
individual islands and colonies
 circumcision practices in, 225
 exclusionary practices in, 250-51
 religiosity of owners in, 250
 Cary, Elizabeth, 152
 Casas, Bartolomé de las (bishop), 9
 Castiel, Sason Hai, 270, 274
 Castilho, J. del, 244
 Castro, Isaac de, 182
 Catholics
 on Jewish slaveholding, 50-51
 on Moses' wife, 106-7
 Cervantes, Miguel de, 1
 children, Jewish, raised by slaves, 264
 Christianity, conversion of Jews to, 290
 Christians
 Black, burial of, 194
 on color of Jews, 180-81
 in Iberia, 52
 identity of, 204
 Jewish conversion of, 219-21
 on Jewish slaveholding, 50-52, 56, 57, 58
Chronicle of Our Rabbi Moshe. See Divrei ha-Yamim shel Moshe Rabeinu
Chronographie, 32
 circumcision, of Blacks
 in Barbados, 225
 in Caribbean, 225
 in North American colonies, 224-25
 ordinances opposing, 196, 202
 circumcision, of slaves, 73-77, 79, 217
 and absorption, 174
 in Amsterdam
 ban on, 175
 discourse on, 174-75
 laws on, 171-72
 Bible on, 75, 378n24
 in Brazil, 176, 219-26
 for conversion, 177
 in Curaçao, 222
 decline of, 161, 169-75
 in England, 177, 178
 rabbinic opinions on, 75, 172-73, 378n25, 378n33
 records of, 175-79
 in Surinam, 222-23
 class. *See* social class
 Cochin, Jewish community of, 195, 204, 440n101
 commerce in, 212
 Jews in
 as Blacks, 206
 color of, 206-7
 whiteness of, 204-16, 213
 Coehlo, Francisco de Lemos, 120
 Cohen, Martin A., 275
 Cohen, Robert, 179, 219, 228, 251, 253, 281, 297, 298
Colloquium Heptaplomeres, 132
 colonialism, and Sephardic Amsterdam, 198-204
 colonial period, Black-Jewish relations during, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9
 colonies. *See also* specific colonies
 American
 burial of slaves in, 237
 circumcision practices in, 224-25
 dependence on slavery in, 254
 exclusion of Blacks in, 203-4
 Jews in, on abolition, 291
 religiosity of owners in, 249
 English, 217-53
 anti-Black prejudices in, 168
 circumcision of slaves in, 178
 Iberian, slave practices in, 201-2
 Jewish discourse from, 280-87
 manumission in, frequency of, 231
 religious identity in, 217
 slaveholding in, 58-63
 slave trade in, 58-63, 202
 Spanish, *sistema de castas* in, 167
 color, of Jews, 296. *See also* Blackness, Jewish; Whiteness, Jewish
 Christians on, 180-81
 Europeans on, 180-83
 Georgia colony and, 425n90
 Jewish perceptions of, 183-89
 Comestor, Peter, 34
 commerce
 Jews and Blacks engaged in, 267, 467n70
 and perception of Jewish Whiteness, 211-12
 with slaves, 90, 386n123
 communal leadership, and religious observance, 248-49
 communal mastery, in Surinam, 262-63
 Confrada, Doña, 85-86
 Congregation Shearith Israel, 67-68
 Constantinus Africanus, 25
 continents
 early modern era awareness of, 18
 as represented by Noah's sons, 18, 19, 143-144
 Yitshak Abravanel and, 18

- conversion
 of Blacks, to Judaism, 300, 303
 of Jews, to Christianity, 290
 of slaves, to Judaism, 70, 74-79, 86, 92
 complications with, 88-89
 in Dutch Brazil, 219-22
 records of, 175-79
 in Surinam, 224
 Conversos, 7, 73, 212
 Cooper, Thomas (Reverend), 157
 Cope, R. Douglas, 4, 168, 201
 Cornely, Thomas, 282
 Correa, Violante. *See* Naar, Debora Hana
 Cortés, Hernán, 41
Cosmographiae, 152
 Costa, Issac da, 266, 287
 Coutino, Abraham Dias, 234
 Cranganore, abandonment of, 205, 440n101
 Crasto, Manval Mendes de, 199
 criminal activity, in Amsterdam, 96-97
 Crisostom, John, 19
Cuadripartito, 126
 Cugoano, Ottobah, 299
 Cunningham, William, 153
 Curaçao
 burial practices in, 237, 238
 circumcision practices in, 222
 exclusionary practices in, 251-52, 252
 intimacy with slaves in, 261-62
 Jewish merchants in, 295
 manumission in, 232, 234
 naming practices in, 245-46, 247
 family names, 246
 religiosity in
 of owners, 248-49, 250
 of slaves, 226-27
 Sephardic Jews in (before 1800), names of, 333-35
 slave names
 in eighteenth century, 318-30
 surnames, 326-30
 curse of Ham, 19, 23, 146-53
 astronomy and, 411n98
 author citations relating to, 136 (map), 137-38
 division of continents and, 19, 345n10
 Jewish discourse on, 140-46, 270, 274-76, 298
 and Kushites, 34-35, 275-76
 medieval interpretations of, 28-35
 and Muslims, enmity with Christians, 33
 origins of, 135-40, 136 (map)
 and slavery, 28-35, 135, 136 (map), 137-40, 148, 152
 Da Cadomosto. *See* Mosto, Alvise da Cá da
Darhe Jesarim, founding of, 252-53
 David, 131
 David ben Aryeh Leib, Rabbi, 269
 David ben Avraham ben ha Rambam, 30, 65, 74, 76, 90, 109, 130, 172, 174, 197, 205
 David de Rephael Meldola (David ben Rafael Meldola), Rabbi, 6, 63, 79, 249, 250, 256, 287, 288
 David ha-Reuveni, 134, 184
 David ibn Zimra, Rabbi (Radbaz), 66, 74, 77, 81, 82, 83, 89, 124, 173, 174, 249, 376n10
 David Kimhi, Rabbi, 273
 David Meldola, Rabbi (of The Hague), 259
 Davis, David Brion, 2, 4, 7, 153, 160, 214, 295, 300
 Davis, N. Darnell, 60
 de Britto, Raphael and Grasia, names of slaves belonging to, 309-10
 DeCordova, Joshua Hezekiah, 282
Démonomanie, 132
 Dentz, Oudschans, 253
 De Pina family, 95, 97
De Rebus hispanie, 147
 Descanso Plantation (Surinam), slave names at, 311-13
 dhimmis, 53-54
 Diamond, A.S., 58
 Dias, Moseh de Ishac, 143-44, 160
 Dickinson, Jonathan, 290
 Dimiana (slave), 93
 Dinis, Alvaro, 92-93
 discourse, Jewish
 Ashkenazic
 on Blackness, 272
 on curse of Ham, 274
 on Blacks, 213-14, 267-80, 292, 296, 297, 299
 on circumcision practices, 174-75
 from colonies, 280-87
 on curse of Ham, 140-46, 270, 274-76, 298
 elite, on race, 214
 on ethnography, 292-93
 European, 267-80
 on Kushites, 270
 rabbinic, on slaves, 269-80
 Sephardic, on curse of Ham, 274
 on slaves, 267-80, 269-80
 in Surinam, 281-82, 282-87
Divrei ha-Yamim shel Moshe Rabeinu, 31, 103, 104, 112, 163
 Döhm, Christian, 282

- Domingito (slave of Abraham Dias Coutino), 234
 Dotan Plantation (Surinam), slave names at, 314-15
 Dovals, David Levi, 266
 Doyle, Maggie (maidservant), 83
 Drescher, Seymour, 2, 291
 drush, 337
 Dutch Brazil. *See* Brazil (Dutch)
 Dutch colonies, 178, 199, 217-53. *See also* specific colonies
 Eden, Richard, 144
 education. *See* religious education
 Edwards, Bryan, 298
 Efra'im Shlomo ben Aharon Lenczyca, Rabbi, 151
 Egypt, 53-54, 124, 126
 eighteenth century
 Jewish elite in, 255-61
 perceptions in
 of Blacks, 254-93
 of Kushites, 271
 slaveholding practices
 in Caribbean, 301
 in Dutch colonies, 217-53
 in English colonies, 217-53
 slave names used in
 Barbados, 305-6
 Curaçao, 318-30
 Jamaica, 307, 331-32
 Surinam, 308-17
 El Abulense. *See* Madrigal, Alfonso de (Bishop of Avila)
 Eldad ha-Dani, 118, 164
 Eleazar b. Judah of Worms, 117
 Eliahu ben Asher ha-Levi Ashkenazi, 143
 Eliahu Daveih ha-Cohen, 104
 Eliezer (slave), 95, 97
 Eliezer Ashkenazi, Rabbi, 110-11, 140
 Eliezer Azikri, Rabbi, 67
 Elijah of Ferrara, 205
 elite, Jewish
 eighteenth-century, 255-61
 Sephardic
 on race, 214
 self-image, 185-86
 Eltis, David, 161
 El Tostado. *See* Madrigal, Alfonso de (Bishop of Avila)
 Emmanuel, Isaac, 62, 227, 232, 281
 Emmanuel, Suzanne, 62
 Encyclopedia Judaica, 116
 Endelman, Todd M., 301
 Engelbrecht, Martin, *Jewish Meal at the Festival of Tabernacles* (engraving), 258
 England, circumcision practices in, 177, 178
 English colonies, 168, 178, 217-53
 English Guinea Company, 158
 English Royal Africa Company, 162
 Enlightenment, perception of Blacks in, 254-93
 Enriquez, Jacob Josua Bueno (Iacob Ieosua Bueno Enriquez), 57, 200
 Espelho dos Reis, 33
 Esquerre, Jorge Cañizares, 213, 214, 446nn153-4
 Ethics of the Fathers, 160
 Ethiopians. *See* Kushites
 ethnography
 autoethnography, Jewish, 179-91
 Jewish discourse on, 292-93
 European perceptions, early modern
 of Blacks, 186, 213
 on color of Jews, 180-83
 of Jews, 185-86
 evil eye, 105, 106
 exclusionary ordinances (Amsterdam), 195-96, 215
 on burials, 192-93, 195
 on circumcisions, 196
 language of, 202-4
 leaders of, 200-201
 response to, 214-15
 exclusionary practices
 in Caribbean, 250-51
 in Curaçao, 251-52
 in Jodensavanne, 198
 in Surinam, 253
 Explanation of Why Blacks are Black, 148, 161
 Faber, Eli, 2
 Faraj, Gregory Abu'l, 32
 Farisol, Avraham, 117, 118, 124, 143, 165
 Farro, Joseph Gabay, 234
 Felippa (slave), 92-93
 Ferdinand I (Grand Duke of Tuscany), 56
 Fernão (Duke of Viséu), 43-44, 47
 Filibert, Emanuel (Duke of Savoy), 55
 fingers, bloodletting from, 121, 397n35
 Flint, Valerie, 19
 Fonço, Marguerita (slave), 95
 Fonseca, Ishac Aboab da, Rabbi, 125, 143, 259
 Foresti, Jacopo Filippo, 143
 Fosso (slave of Nassy family), 230, 284
 Frances, Ya'akov, 127

- Franco, Hayim, 206
 Franco, Solomon, 233
 Frankel, Rachel, 238
 Franks, Jacob, 281
 Franks, Richa, 281
 Fryer, Peter, 168, 241
 Furies, 121
 Furtado, Vincente, 92-93
 Gabay Yzidro, Abraham, Rabbi, 250, 292
 Galen, 25, 30
 Garcia, Gregorio, 132, 144, 152
 Garden of Eden, 134
 Garrigus, John, 291
 Gayo, Moses Jamis, 225
 Geertz, Clifford, 5, 302
 Genebrard, Gilbert, 148, 150, 151, 158
 geography
 of author cites on curse of Ham, 136 (map)
 of study, 5
 geonim, 76
 Georgia colony, and color of Jews, 425n90
 Ger, Sara (slave), 98
 Gerber, Haim, 53
 Gevurot ha-Shem, 141
 Gibson, Leigh E., 78
 Gilroy, Paul, 7
 Godines, Benjamin Senior, 93
 Memento Mori (drawing), 94
 Goitein, S. D., 205
 Goldberg, David Theo, 167
 Goldenberg, David, 36-37
 Goldsmid, Benjamin, 256
 Goldsmid, Isaac Lyon, 290, 291
 Goliath, 130, 244
 Goliath (slave), 244
 Golyat. *See* Goliath
 Gómara, Francisco López de, 148
 Gómez, Antonio Enriquez, 187
 Gooch, William, 180
 Goslinga, Cornelis, 199
 Gould, N. H., 225
 Gouveia, António de, 206
 Gradis, Abraham, 255
 Gradis, David, 291
 Grande é General Estoria, 19, 33
 Gratz, Michael, 248, 266
 Grayzel, Solomon, 76
 The Great Midrash, 29
 Greenblatt, Stephen J., 4
 Greenhalgh, John, 180
 Gregory the Great (Pope), 19
 Gutman, Herbert G., 239
 Gutteres, Jacob, 290
 Gutwirth, Eleazar, 214
 Hackabout, Moll, 258
 Haftorah, 337
 Ha'im Yosef David Azulai (Hayyim Yosef David Azulai), Rabbi, 8, 81, 87, 271, 272, 274
 halakha. *See also* responsa
 on Blacks
 exclusion of, 252
 influence of, 202
 defined, 337
 on discrimination, 214-15
 living according to, 169
 on manumission, 79-80, 89
 observance of, 80-86, 301
 on slaveholding, 2, 3, 63-65, 67, 74-79
 on slaves, 72-73, 90, 301
 burying, 193
 circumcising, 76-77, 172, 178-79
 immersion for, 77
 marrying, 228
 owning, 175
 and sexual relations with master, 80-83
 treatment of, 288-89, 298
 Ham, 17, 19, 22, 32, 116, 117, 119, 130, 132
 children of, 145
 curse of. *See* curse of Ham
 Hamburger, Mordechai, 268
 Hannaford, Ivan, 151, 167
 Hart, Daniel, 225
 Hartog, Johannes, 227, 228
 haskamot
 on circumcising slaves, 176
 defined, 337
 on slave absorption, 171
 Hayyim Hrishenti, Rabbi
 hazan, 337
 Hecht, Jean J., 71
 Heidegger, Johann Heinrich, 151
 Henriques, Moses Josua, 92
 Henriquez, Philippe, 62
 Henriquez, Philippe, *alias* Jahacob Senior, 301
 Henriques, Abraham Coen, 98
 Herbert, Thomas, 157
 heritability, of slaves, 230-37, 235, 415n148
 in Surinam, 235-36
 Herrera y Tordesillas, Antonio de, 158
 Hess, Yosef, 273, 274
 Heyleyn, Peter, 152
 Hippocrates, 21
 Hirsch, Elizabeth Feist, 41
 Historia arabum, 147

- Historia Scholastica*, 34
Historical Essay on the Colony of Surinam, 5,
 62, 63, 199, 223, 228, 230,
 282-87
 Hiya, Rabbi, Ham and, 29
 Hodgen, Margaret T., 167
 Hoetnik, H., 40
 Hogarth, William, 258
 Hoogbergen, Wim, 62
 Hooge, Romeyn de, 93
 Horeb Plantation (Surinam), slave names at,
 316
 Horta, José da, 106
 Humanes, Don Manuel de (Jahacob
 Henriques Pimentel), 279
 humanity, of Blacks, 266-67
 Humash, 337
 Hume, 167
 Huna, Rabbi, Ham and, 29
 Hunwick, J. O., 54, 71
 Hurvits, Yeshayahu, 67, 112, 113
- Iberia
 culture of, Sephardic assimilation into,
 185
 guilds in, 45
 influence of class on, 43-46
 Jews in, 47
 names of, given to slaves, 242, 243,
 246-47
 perceptions towards Blacks in, 41-45
 slaveholding in, 52, 56
 and slave trade, 44-46, 359n182
 territories of, slave trade after breakup of,
 202
 Ibn al-Faqih, on blacks, 30
 Ibn Khaldûn, 22-23, 347n30
 identity. *See also* Blackness, Jewish;
 Whiteness, Jewish
 of Blacks, 266-67
 of Christians, 204
 of Jews as Black, 204-5, 206
 religious, in colonies, 217
 of Sephardim, 216
Igeret Orhot Olam, 118
 immersion. *See* ritual immersion, of slaves
 India, Jewish communities in. *See* Cochín;
 Cranganore
 Indian caste system, 210
 inheritance. *See* heritability
 innate slavery, concept of, 270
 intimacy, with slaves, 80-83, 261-67
 Iohanni, Xaguala di Castro, 73-74, 79
 Iohanni, Xalonio di Castro (slave), 73-74
 Ishac Athias, Rabbi, 65, 68
 Ishaq ibn Imran, 25
- Isidore, 19, 147, 345n10
 Israel, Jonathan, 176, 199
 Israel, Mikveh, 226
 Issac Aboab, Rabbi, 250
- Jacob Huli, 299
 Jacobs, Barnard, 224
 Jahacob Casseres, Rabbi, 265
 Jamaica
 Jewish ownership of plantations in, 61,
 369n102
 slaves in, 217-18, 243
 names of, 307, 331-32
 James I of Aragon (King of Spain), 51
 Japhet, 22, 29, 31, 32, 33
 division of continents and, 19, 345n10
 Yitshak Abravanel and, 48
 Jesarim, Darhe, 253
 Jesus, Theresa de, 132
Jewish Antiquities, 147
 Jewish blackness. *See* blackness, Jewish
 Jewish discourse. *See* discourse, Jewish
 Jewish law. *See* halakha
 Jewish whiteness. *See* whiteness, Jewish
 Jews. *See also* Ashkenazic Jews; Sephardic
 Jews
 as black. *See* blackness, Jewish
 and Blacks, 116-22, 124-25, 125-27
 as masters, 284
 and slaveholding, 50-52, 55-56, 66-68,
 128-29
 in colonies, 60-61, 68-69, 125
 in Egypt, 54, 82
 and Ottoman Empire, 53-54
 restrictions on, 50-51, 74
 Sephardic, 55-58
 in Sicily, 73-74
 and slaves
 affiliation with Jewish community,
 86-89
 attitudes towards, 90-91
 marriage with, 87
 and slave trade, 52-54
 as white. *See* whiteness, Jewish
 João II (King of Portugal), 44, 45, 47,
 127
 Jobson, Richard, 149, 157, 158
Joden Quartier, 61
 Jodensavanne (Surinam), 198, 218, 238.
See also Surinam
 Jordan, Winthrop D., 4, 135, 160
 Joseph ibn Wakar, Rabbi, 126
 Josephus, 19, 33, 103, 143, 147, 346n12
 Jossiao Pardo, Rabbi, 248, 250
 Juan I (King of Spain), 51
 Juan II (King of Spain), 51

- Judaism
 Blacks converting to, 300, 303
 slaves converting to, 70, 74-79, 86, 92
 complications with, 88-89
 in Dutch Brazil, 219-22
 records of, 175-79
 in Surinam, 224
 slaves observing, 83-86
- Kant, Immanuel, 167
 Kaplan, Yosef, 215, 216, 301
 kashrut, 84
 Katz, David S., 185
 Katz, Jacob, 90
 Kena'an. *See* Canaan
 ketuba, 337
 Kimhi, David, 20, 46, 151
 kippa, 337
 Kirk, Reverend Robert, 180
 Klingberg, Frank J., 10
Kli Yakar, 151
 Klooster, Wim, 231
 Kohut, George A., 3
 Korn, Bertram Wallace, 3, 58, 231,
 241
 Krochmal, Nachman, 293
 Kush, 17, 20, 27, 104, 127, 143-44
 literary representations of, 127-28
 Moses and, 103
 Yitshak Abravanel and, 36
 Kushites, 31, 37, 38, 43-44, 124, 297
 accounts of, 184
 and curse of Ham, 34, 275-76
 humoral theory and, 26
 interpretations of term, 103-17
 in Jewish discourse, 270
 Jews as descendants of, 205
 literary references of, 127-32
 perceptions of, 271
 negative, 273, 280
 positive, 274
 perpetual servitude of, 20
 and philosophy, 133-35
 in Sephardic "vocabulary," 277
 sinfulness of, 134
 speech of, 131
 visual treatments of, 132-33, 132 (illus.)
 wife of Moses, 102-15, 164-65
 Yitshak Abravanel and, 17, 20, 28
- Labat, Jean-Baptiste, 159
 labor, slave. *See* slave labor
 Ladelejansa Plantation (Surinam), slave
 names at, 314
 Ladino Bible of Ferrara, 117
 Ladino Pentateuch, 117
- Laguna, Daniel Israel Lopez, 278
 Lamdan, Ruth, 66, 81
 Lampronti, Yitshak, 271
 Lamur, Humphrey E., 217
 Landi, Guido, 41
 language
 describing Blacks, 278-79
 of exclusionary ordinances, 202-4
 Sephardic "vocabulary" (1773), 277-78
 Laniado, Avraham, 131-32
 Latour, Bernard, 12
 Laval, Pyard de, 209
 leaders, Jewish, 169, 200-201
 leadership, communal, 248-49
 Ledsma, Aharon, 84
 Leeuwenhoek, Antonie van, 255
 Leo Africanus, 132
 Leone da Modena, Rabbi, 68, 116, 125,
 127, 128, 134, 173, 174
 Leo of Rozmial, 43
 Le Roy, Louis, 122
 Lesley, Arthur, 206
 Leslie, Charles, 237
 Levi, David, 117
 Levi ben Gerson, Rabbi, 148
 Lévi-Strauss, Claude, 302
 Levita, Elijah, 143
 Levy, Hester, 180
 Levy, Moses, 180
 Levy, Moses Elias, 291
Liber chronicarum, and division of continents,
 19, 346n.11
 Libermann, François Marie Paul, 290
 Liebman, Seymour, 61
 Lier, R.A. J. van, 10
Life of Yehuda, 125
 lifestyles, eighteenth-century, 255-61
 Ligon, Richard, 162
 Lilith, 121
 Lindo, Abraham, 256
 Linnaeus, Carl, 167, 278
 Linschoten, John Huygen Van, 206, 211
 Lisbon, burials in, 194
 Lisbon Bible of 1482, 65
 Littré, M., 255
 Locke, John, 152, 163
 Loker, Zvi, 281
 London, circumcision practices in, 177.
See also England
 Lopez, Aaron, 249, 265, 266
 Louzada, David Hisquiau, 281
 Lucena, Joao, 158
 Lyons, J. J., Rabbi, 225
- Ma' areh ha-Sorefet, 67
 Machado, Imanuël, 263

- Mackenthum, Gesa, 139
 Madera, Gregorio Lopez, 158
 Madrigal, Alfonso de (Bishop of Avila), 27,
 33, 42, 106, 107, 148
 Maduro, Levy, 225-26, 450n44
 mahamad
 on circumcision, 176, 202
 defined, 337
 maidservants. *See also* servants; women slaves
 Maggie Doyle, 83
 Simha, 85-86
 Maimonides. *See* David ben Avraham ben
 ha Rambam
 Maimuni. *See* David ben Avraham ben ha
 Rambam
 Malpighi, Marcello, 255
 mamzer, 87
 Manuel, King Dom, 194
 manumission, 20, 73, 77, 79-80, 89, 217,
 230-37, 380n61, 454n101. *See also*
 abolition
 in Barbados, 236-37
 in colonies, frequency of, 231
 in Curaçao, 232, 234
 from mercy, 234-35
 by other free Blacks, 233-34
 and ritual immersion, 174
 in Surinam, 232-33
 writings on, 233
 Marcos, Solomon. *See* Nis, Filipe de
 Marcus, Jacob Rader, 6, 222
 Marets, Jean Goupy des, 239
 Maria. *See* Miriam
 Maro (slave), 83
 marriage
 between Black or mulatto Jews, 228
 concubine, with African women, 42,
 356n158
 between slave and Jew, 87, 88, 385n110
 Martyr, Peter, 41
 Marzuca the Jewess, 73-74
 masters, Jews as, 284
 Mas'udi, 30, 32
 Mather, Cotton, 152
 Maura, Luna (slave), 91-93
 May, Reverend Samuel J., 289
 Maza, Sarah, 94
 Medici I, Cosimo de, 55
 Medieval Jews, on skin color, 183-84
Meditaciones sobre la Historia Sagrada del
 Genesis, 143-44, 160
 Mediterranean, slaves in, 70, 175n2, 178,
 229
 Meir ben Shem Tov Melamed, Rabbi, 73
 melancholia, Blackness and, 25-27, 29, 130
 Melkman, J., 198
 Mello, José Antônio Gonsalves de, 59, 219
 Menahem ben Moshe Raba, 126
 Menahem ben Aharon ibn Zera, 24
 Menasseh ben Israel, Rabbi, 119, 121, 122,
 175, 186, 187, 272
 Mendes, David Franco, 272
 Menkis, Richard, 289
 merchandise, Blacks as, 265-66
Merchant of Venice, 182
 Mesa, Naar, 264
 Mesquita, Joseph Bueno de, 265
 Meza, Ishak Naar, 266
Microcosmus, 152
 midrash, 337
 Midrash ha-Gadol. *See* Midrash Rabba
 Midrash Rabba, 29
 Midrash Tanhuma, 30-31, 151
 Midyan, 104
 mikve, 80, 83
 defined, 337
 Mill, John Stuart, 167
 Mills, Sara, 17
 Mintz, Sidney W., 168
 minyan, 337
 Miriam, 103-6, 107, 108, 109, 111, 114
The Mirror of Medusa, 105
 Mishna, 337
Mishneh Torah, 65
 Mission, François-Maximilian, 181
 Mitsrayim, 20
 mitsva, 337
 mohel, 337
 Mohrens, Rudolph August (slave), 93
 Moirans, Epifanio de, 149
 Molkho, Shlomo, 134, 185
Monarquia indiana, 148
 Monsanto, Joseph, 256
 Montalboddo, Fracanzano da, 117
 Mordehai ben Hillel, Rabbi, 172, 173
 Mordehai ha-Cohen of Tsfat, 112, 145
 Moreau, Pierre, 222
Moreh Nevuim, 130
 Moreira, Rodrigues, 277
 Moretti, Franco, 125
 Mörner, Magnus, 4, 231
 Moscato, Yehuda, 133
 Moses, 31
 Kush and, 103
 Kushite wife of, 102-15
 Moses Maimonides. *See* David ben
 Avraham ben ha Rambam
 Moses Sofer, Rabbi, 273
 Moshe. *See* Moses
 Moshe Albelda, Rabbi, 109, 141

- Moshe Alsheikh, Rabbi, 111, 112, 127, 134
 Moshe Nirol ha-Cohen, 145
 Mosseh Rafael d'Aguilar, 272
 Mosto, Alvise da Cà da, 117, 412n107
 Muhji al-din ibn al Arabi, 27
 mulattos
 circumcision practices for, 175
 free, manumitting slaves, 233-34
 identity, meaning of, 169
 ordinances excluding, 203-4, 251-52
 as rabbis, 91-92
 religious education of, 197-98
 Trombeta, 98-99
 Mullin, Michael, 240
 Münster, Sebastian, 122, 151
 Muslims
 conflicts with, 189
 and curse of Ham, 33
 slaveholding, 53-54
 Naar, Debora Hana, 93
 Nabal the Carmelite, 129
 names, given to slaves, 217
 African, 239-40, 458n148
 in Barbados, 305-6
 Biblical, 240
 in Curaçao, 245-46, 247
 eighteenth century, 318-30
 surnames, 326-30
 in eighteenth century
 Curaçao, 318-30
 Jamaica, 331-32
 Surinam, 308-17
 euphemistic/ironic forms, 241, 459n166
 Iberian, 242, 243, 246-47
 in Jamaica, 243, 307, 331-32
 Jewish, 223-24, 238-48, 241, 242, 243,
 244, 246-47
 moral characteristics as, 240
 in seventeenth and eighteenth centuries
 Barbados, 305-6
 Jamaica, 307
 in Surinam, 243-45, 308-17
 surnames (Curaçao), 326-30
 nameslessness, slave, 265
 Nassy, David J. C. (Cohen), 228, 253, 283
 Nassy, Isaak (Ishak), 244, 262
 Nassy, Isahak de Joseph Cohen, 264
 Nassy, Josseph de Samuel, 234
 Nassy, Mosseh C., 266
 Nassy, Samuel, 160
 Nassy family, 229
 slave of (Fosso), 230, 284
 Natanel ben Yeshayahu, 35
 nation, idea of in Middle Ages, 166
 Nation of Islam, 1
Naturalis Historia, 21
 Nebuchadnezzar, 28
 negro identity, meaning of, 169, 181.
 See also Blacks
 Nehemias, Manval, 199
 Nerlich, Michael, 4
New Atlantis, The, 138
 Newport, burial practices in, 237
 Nicanos (King of Kush), 104
 Nicolas V (Pope), 161
Nicomachean Ethics, 21
 Nieto, David, 276
 Nieuhoff, John, 221
 Nieuwe Staer Plantation (Surinam), slave
 names at, 308-9
 Nimrod, 27, 32
 nineteenth-century, abolitionist Jews in,
 290-92
 Nirenburg, David, 4
 Nis, Filipe de, 91-93
Nishmat Hayyim, 119
 Noah, 32
 sons of, 18, 19, 29, 32, 141-46, 345n9,
 345n10, 346n12. *See also* individual
 sons by name
 Noah's curse. *See* curse of Ham
Novum Organum, 138
 Nugent, Lady Maria, 181
 Nunes, Manuel, 189, 429n137
Nuremberg Chronicle, and division of
 continents, 19, 346n11
 observance, religious. *See* religious
 observance
Olelot Efra'im, 67
 Onkelos, 104, 113
 Oppenheim, J. D., 228, 229, 452n74
 oral Torah, 337
 ordinance(s)
 of 1627, 192, 195
 exclusionary, in Amsterdam. *See*
 exclusionary ordinances
 (Amsterdam)
 Origen, 29-30, 106
Orlando Furioso, 116, 127
 Osorio, Geronimo, 161
 Ottolenghe, Joseph, 290
 Ottoman Empire, slaves in, 53-54
 Ouderkerk Sephardic cemetery, 97-101
 Ovid, 21
 pagan slaves, Christian burial practices of,
 193-94
 Pagden, Anthony, 22

- Paiba, Abraham de, 178
 Paiba, Issac de, 178
 Pais, Álvaro. *See* Pelagius, Bishop Alvarus
 Paloma, Doña, 85
 Papa, Rabbi, 75-76
 Paradesi Jews, 208-11
 Pardo, David, Rabbi, 174, 421n42
 parnas, 337
 Parra, David Hm. de la, 228
 parsha, 337
 Patterson, Orlando, 265, 303
 Pelagius, Bishop Alvarus, 33, 348n32
 Penso, Mosseh Hisquiao, 256
 Pereira, Aron, 212
 Pereira, Diego Lopes, 256
 Pereira, Duarte Pacheco, 153
 Pereira, Judith, 236, 237
 Pereira, Pedro. *See* Pereyra de Paiva, Moses
 Pereyra, Abraham, 188
 Pereyra de Paiva, Moses, 204, 206-12, 442n120, 443n128, 444n129
 on Paradesi Jews, color of, 208-11
 on Whites, 208-9
 Pestana, Alvaro de Brito, 181
 Petty, Sir William, 163, 167
 Peyrère, Isaac de la, 180
 Philadelphia, burial practices in, 237
 Philo of Alexandria, 149
 Phut, 20
 Picart, Bernard, 169, 256-57
 The Passover of the Portuguese Jews
 (etching), 170
 pigmentocracy, 204, 440n94
 Pike, Ruth, 79, 193
 Pimentel, Jahacob Henriques, *alias* Don
 Manuel de Humanes, 279
 Pinelo, Antonio Rodriguez de León, 157, 158
 Pinto, David, names of slaves belonging to, 315-16
 Pinto, Isaac (Ishac) de, 93, 279, 281, 287
 Pinto, Jacob, 265
 Pinto, Joseph Homem, 227
 Pires, Diogo. *See* Molkho, Shlomo
 Pirkei d'Rabi Eliezer, 184, 191
 plantations, 11
 Jewish ownership of, 59, 61-63, 368n84, 368n85, 369n102
 in Surinam, names given to slaves on, 308-17
 Pliny, 19, 21, 35
 Politics, 21
 Poole, Matthew, 115, 151
 Portugal. *See* Iberia
 Portuguese
 Conversos, 7, 73, 212
 and Cochín Jews, 212
 taking of African slaves by, 9, 343n.37
 Pory, John, 182
 posek, 337
 Posidonius, 21
 Possevino, Antonio, 148, 158, 187
 Postel, Guillaume, 144, 151
 Postma, Johannes, 199
 prayer books, on circumcising slaves, 171
 Price, Richard, 229, 240, 244, 263, 299
Problemata, 25
 Protestant burial practices, 195
 Ptolemy, 25, 126
 Puckrein, Gary, 168
 Pufendorf, Samuel Freiherr von, 55
 Pulgar, Hernando del, 153
 Pullan, Brian, 92
 Purchas, Samuel, 149
 Quakers, and Sephardim, 289-90
 Querido, Diego Dias, 93
 Quiras, Ester Mendes, 265
 Rabad (Rabbi Avraham ben David), 173
 Rabad of the Sefer Yetsirah, 126, 130
 race. *See also* blackness, Jewish; Blacks; identity; whiteness, Jewish
 and Iberians, 41
 Jewish discourse on, 214
 theories of, 21-24, 25
 Yitzhak Abravanel and, 21-25
 Rada, Rodrigo Jiménez de, 147
 Radbaz (Rabbi David ibn Zimra). *See* David ibn Zimra, Rabbi (Radbaz)
 Rafael Yosef ben Hayyim Hazan, Rabbi, 64, 111, 112
 Rahabi, David, 211, 212
 Raleigh, Sir Walter, 152
 Rama Plantation (Surinam), slave names at, 313-14
 Rambam (Moses Maimonides). *See* David ben Avraham ben ha Rambam
 Rashi (Rabbi Shlomo Yitshaki), 34, 35, 113, 144, 151, 164, 274, 276, 299
 Ray, John, 167
 Raynal, Abbé, 285
 Recife, slaveholding practices in, 219-20
 Reed, Ishmael, 1
Regimiento de los Príncipes, 126
 registers, circumcision, 177-78
 Reis, Padre Mestre Gaspar dos, 182
 religious education
 of mulattos and Blacks, 197-98
 for "privileged" slaves, 228-30

- religious identity, in colonies, 217
 religious lives
 of owners, 248-53
 of slaves
 in Curaçao, 226-27
 in Surinam, 226-30
 religious observance
 communal leadership enforcing, 248-49
 of halakha, 80-86, 301
 of Sabbath, 227-28
 by slaves, 83-86, 227-28
 responsa, 70, 74, 77, 80. *See also* halakha
 and issues of slavery, 72, 374n159
 in northwestern Europe, 92
 Re'uven ben Avraham ha-Levi, Rabbi, 273, 274, 275
 ritual immersion
 of Blacks, 196
 of slaves, 174, 177
 and Jewish Law, 77
 rituals, Jewish, slaves and, 169-71
 Robbins, Bruce, 295, 300
 Robles, Gregorio de, 267
 Roediger, David, 183
Romanus Pontifex, 161
 Rosenthal, Judah, 184
 Roth, Cecil, 169-70, 171, 296
 Rubios, Lopez de Palacio, 33, 156
 Ruderman, David, 117
 Rufus of Ephesus, 25
 Sá, Mem de, 189
 Saba, Avraham, 107, 141
 Sabbath. *See* Shabbat
 St. Méry, Moreau de, 237
 Salama, Ovadia, 80
 Salinas y Córdova, Buenaventura de, 157-58
 Salvador, Joseph, 276, 277
 Šam. *See* Shem
 Šams ad-Din 'Abdallah Muhammad ad Dimašqi, 32
 Samuel, Edgar Roy, 212
 Samuel, Wilfred S., 3, 218, 231, 238, 241
 Sandehrin, B.T., 140
 Sandoval, Alonso de, 163, 298
 Sandys, George, 123, 149-50, 157
 San Juan, Juan Huarte de, 122
 Santos, João dos (friar), 120
 Sarai, 48
 Sasportas, Isaac Yeshurun, 289
 Satanov, Isaac, 280
 Saturn, 126, 149
 Saul Levi Morteira, Rabbi, 178, 191
 Saunders, A. C. de C. M., 4, 51, 193
 Scaliger, Joseph, 133
 Schedel, Hartmann, and division of continents, 19, 346n.11
 Schulma, Alan Richard, 116
 Schwartz, Stuart, 70, 213
Secret Relationship Between Blacks and Jews, 1
 sedeca, 337
Sefer ha-Kuzari, 133
Sefer ha-Yashar, 103
Sefer Nitsahon Yashan, 179, 185
Sefer Yosef ha-Mekaneh, 180
 Segal, J. B., 210, 211
 Segre, Renata, 55
 segregated burials, 192-93, 193-95, 196, 237-38
 Seixas, Gershom (cantor), 67-68
 Seixas, Moses, 224
 Selomoh de Oliveyra, Rabbi, 174
 Selomoh Levy Maduro, Rabbi, 225, 226
 Sem. *See* Shem
 Seneca, 19
 Sephardic Jews, 5-7
 assimilation into Iberian culture, 185
 in Curaçao before 1800, names of, 333-35
 Diaspora of, 166-91, 192-216
 discourse, on curse of Ham, 274
 identity of, 216
 plantations of, 59, 61-63
 and Quakers, 289-90
 self-image of, 185-86
 and slaveholding, 55-58, 60, 92-93, 94f
 in Amsterdam, 93-101
 in Hamburg-Altona, 92-93
 restrictions on, 56
 and slave trade, 58-63, 59f
 Western communities of, 174-75, 175-79
 Sephardic "vocabulary," 277-78
 Serrano, José Franco, 113, 114, 393n52
 servants
 distinction between slaves and, 8, 343n.32
 sexual relations with, 80-83, 381n69
Servi liberi seu naturalis mancipiorum libertatis iusta defensio, 149
 seventeenth century
 Dutch colonies in, 216-53
 English colonies in, 217-53
 Sephardic Diaspora in, 166-91, 192-216
 slave names used in
 in Barbados, 305-6
 in Jamaica, 307
 Severus, Sulpicius, 187

- sexual relations, between master and slave,
80-83, 381n69
- Shabbat, 338
- slave observance of, 227-28
- Shakespeare, William, 182
- Sha'ul ha-Levi Morteira, 68, 125, 127
- Shem, 21, 22, 29, 31, 32, 33
- and division of continents, 19, 345n10
- Shem Tov ben Yosef Falaquera, 26, 128
- Shem Tov ibn Shem Tov, 140, 392n31
- Shevet Yehuda, 127
- Shimshon ben Yitshak ha-Levi Bloch, 292,
293
- Shlomo Alghazi, Rabbi, 114
- Shlomo al-Konstantini, Rabbi, 26
- Shlomo ben Avraham ha-Cohen, Rabbi,
81
- Shlomo ben Mas'oud Adhan, Rabbi, 259,
260
- Shlomo ben Ya'akov Almoli, 128
- Shlomo ben Yisrael, 273
- Shlomo ibn Verga, 185
- Shmuel Aboab, Rabbi, 86
- Shmuel ben Hayyim ben Yosef Vital, 112
- Shmuel de Medina, Rabbi, 63, 78, 88-89
- Shmuel ibn Zarza, Rabbi, 26, 126, 142
- Shnei Luhot ha-Brit (The Two Tablets of the
Covenant), 67, 112
- Shoemaker, Nancy, 204
- Short History of Wondrous Things, A, 32
- shtar shihror, 73
- Shulkhan Arukh (The Set Table), 63, 76,
90
- Siebers, Tobin, 105-6
- Sifre, 104, 105, 107, 110, 111, 113
- Silva, Alfonso Franco, 197
- Simha (maidservant), 85-86
- Sintra, Pedro de
- sistema de castas
- development of, 168
- as expressed in ordinances, 202-3
- in Sephardic Amsterdam, 201-2
- in Spanish colonies, 167
- slaveholding
- Christian, 52
- in Egypt, 54
- and halakha, 2-3, 63-65, 67, 74-79
- and Jews, 3, 4, 7, 50-52, 66-68,
128-29
- in Amsterdam, 93-101
- in colonies, 58-63, 68-69
- in Egypt, 54
- in Hamburg-Altona, 92-93
- in Ottoman Empire, 53-54
- restrictions on, 50-51, 74
- Sephardic, 93-98, 55-58
- in Sicily, 73-74
- status of, 68
- slave labor
- alternatives to, 63, 371n131
- showy displays of, 256
- slavery, 7
- Aristotle's theory of natural, 22
- and curse of Ham, 28-35, 135, 136
- (map), 137-40, 148, 153-65
- and Ham's descendants, 32-34
- in Northern Europe, 55
- perpetual, 20, 153-65
- slaves. *See also* Blacks; Kushites
- absorption of. *See* absorption
- affiliation with Jewish community, 86-89
- in Amsterdam, 93-101
- baptism of, 197
- blessing of upon purchase, 153-55
- burial of. *See* burials, of Blacks and slaves
- Canaanite, 63-66, 74, 79
- circumcision of. *See* circumcision, of
slaves
- conversion of. *See* conversion
- Eliezer, 95, 97
- Felippa, 92-93
- Marguerita Fonço, 95
- Sara Ger, 98
- halakha on. *See* halakha
- heritability of. *See* heritability
- Xalonio di Castro Iohanni, 73-74
- Jewish, 65
- Jewish attitudes toward, 90-91
- in Jewish discourse. *See* discourse, Jewish
- manumission of. *See* manumission
- Maro, 83
- marriage with Jewish masters, 87
- Luna Maura, 91-93
- Rudolph August Mohrens, 93
- names given to. *See* names, given to slaves
- nameslessness of, 265
- non-Jewish, Jews usage of, 70-71, 101,
259-60
- observance of Judaism by, 83-86
- pagan, Christian burials of, 193-94
- practicing Jewish rituals, 169-71
- and religion, 50-55
- religious education of. *See* religious
education
- sexual relations between master and,
80-83
- social intimacy with, 261-67
- Trombeta, 98-99
- uncircumcised, 172
- women. *See* women slaves

- slave trade, 6, 9, 10, 11
- African, and Dutch colonies, 199
- Iberian, 44-46, 202, 359n182
- and Jews, 1, 2, 52-54, 58-63
- and Ottoman Empire, 52-54
- Smallhalde Plantation (Surinam), slave
names at, 310-11
- Smith, Jonathan Z., 1
- Smith, Samuel Stanhope, 181
- Snyder, Holly, 61, 224
- social class
- European traditions of, 28
- influencing Iberian attitudes toward
Blacks, 43-46
- Spanish convention of, 350n60
- of Yitshak Abravanel, 43, 46, 360n194
- social intimacy, with slaves, 261-67
- Sommelsdijck, Van (governor), 62
- Sommi, Leone de', 91
- sorcerers, Black, 119-22
- source material, 2
- Spain
- colonies of, *sistema de castas* in, 167
- slaveholding restrictions in, 50-52
- social class conventions in, 28, 350n60
- Stedman, John Gabriel, 6, 248
- Strauss, Levi, 22
- Stuyvesant, Peter, 57
- Sudan, 30
- sugar, colonial trade in, 199-200
- Summa Theologiae, 23
- Supplementum supplementi cronicarum, 143
- Surinam, 5-6, 10. *See also* Jodensavanne
(Surinam)
- burial practices in, 237
- circumcision practices in, 222-23
- colored Jews in, 218-19
- communal mastery in, 262-63
- conversion in, 224
- exclusionary practices in, 253
- halakha on slave treatment in, 288-89
- heritability in, 235-36
- Historical Essay on the Colony of Surinam,
5, 62, 63, 199, 223, 228, 230,
282-87
- intimacy with slaves in, 261-63
- Jewish discourse in, 281-82, 282-87
- manumission in, 232-33
- naming practices in, 243-45
- religiosity of owners in, 248-49
- religious lives of slaves in, 226-30
- slaveholding in, 3, 57, 62
- slave names in (eighteenth century),
308-17
- surnames, slaves with (Curaçao), 326-30
- Swetschinski, Daniel, 5, 216
- Synod of Dordt (1618-19), 196-97
- takana, 338
- Talmud
- on acquisition of slaves, 75, 377n21,
378n25
- on uncircumcised slaves, 172
- Teixeira, Abraham Senior, 200
- Tertre, Jean Baptiste du, 193, 221
- Thackeray, H. St. J., 103
- Thesoro dos diuinis, 68
- Thornton, John, 6, 239
- Tilpenburg Plantation (Surinam), slave
names at, 315-16
- Toaff, Renzo, 56
- Torah, 338
- Torquemada, Juan de, 148, 157, 159, 161
- Tosefta, 338
- Tostado, El. *See* Madrigal, Alfonso de
(Bishop of Avila)
- Touro, Judah, 289
- travel reports, 117-18, 206, 412n107
- treif, 338
- Trombeta (mulatto), 98-99
- Tsenah u-Renah, 145
- Tsipora, 103-5, 107, 110, 111, 112, 113,
114, 392n31. *See also* Moses,
Kushite wife of
- tudesco, 338
- Tur, 67
- Tuvya ha-Cohen, 269
- Tyson, Sir William, 167
- uncircumcised slaves, Talmud on, 172
- Usque, Samuel, 119, 143
- Vais, Abraham Mendes, 264
- Vais, Ribca Mendes, 264
- van Beck, Nicolaas, 227
- Van der Lee, 233
- van Nassau, Governor, 263
- Vaughan, Alden T., 167, 168
- Vazfarro, Ishak, 248
- Vega, Joseph Penso de la, 301
- Vega, Lope de, 188
- Vegetius, 21
- Venetia Nova Plantation (Surinam), slave
names at, 317
- Verlinden, Charles, 7
- Vieira, Antonio, 114
- Vieira, João Fernandes, 125
- Virginia Company, 150, 157
- Vitruvius, 21
- "vocabulary," Sephardic (1773), 277-78

- von Eschenbach, Wolfram, 180
 von Herder, Johann Gottfried, 293
 Wachsmuth, Jeremias, 257
 Jewish Meal at the Festival of Tabernacles
 (engraving), 258
 Warburton, Bishop, 290
 Washington, Joseph R. Jr., 135, 137-39
 wealth, eighteenth-century, 255-61
 Wessely, Naphtali Herz, 6
 West Indian Company, 59, 61, 62
 Westphal, Joanna, 231, 236, 241
 Whistler, Henry, 162
 White(s)
 as identity, 204
 Pereyra de Paiva on, 208-9
 White, Hayden, 294
 whiteness, Jewish, 163, 179-91
 anti-Blackness as means of affirming, 303
 in Cochin, 204-16, 213, 440n98
 and commerce, influence on perception
 of, 211-12
 concept of, 166-67
 and curse of Ham, 158
 glorification of, 187-88
 implications of, 168
 influence on conflict with Muslims, 189
 Jewish perception of, 183-89, 427n111
 and skin color, 123-24
 summoning of, 189-91
 writings on, 285-86
 and Yitshak Abravanel, 48
 witchcraft, European, 121-22
 Wiznitzer, Arnold, 59
 Wolfson, Elliot, 67
 women slaves
 in Mediterranean region, 229
 religious practices of, 226-27
 sexual relations with, 80-83, 381n69
 Wood, A.J. R. Russell, 4
 Ya'akov Avraham, Rabbi, 288
 Ya'akov ben Asher, Rabbi, 63, 76, 77, 172
 Ya'akov ben Shmuel Hagiz, 123, 124, 271
 Ya'akov ben Sh'muel Levi (of Trieste),
 medical license issued to, 190, 190
 (illus.)
 Ya'akov ben Yitshak, 145
 Ya'akov Emden, 268
 Ya'akov Huli, Rabbi, 269, 274, 275,
 276
 Ya'akov Kastro, Rabbi, 63
 Ya'akov Sasportas, Rabbi, 87, 127
 Yafit. *See* Japhet
 Yagel, Abraham, 128, 129
 Yahya ibn Suleiman Tabib, 30, 34
 Ydaña, Abraham, 56
 Yedid Nefesh, 67
 Yefet. *See* Japhet
 Yefet ben Ali, 36-37
 Yehiel ben Azriel Trabot of Ascoli, Rabbi,
 80, 81, 83
 Yehiel of Pisa, 38
 Yehoshua ben Levi, Rabbi, 75-76, 150
 Yehuda Aryeh da Modena, Rabbi. *See*
 Leone da Modena, Rabbi
 Yehudah Ayas, Rabbi, 78
 Yehudah ben Bezalel Löw, Rabbi, 141,
 160
 Yehudah ha-Levi, Rabbi, 109, 133, 164,
 280
 Yerushalmi, Yosef, 185, 295
 yeshiva, 338
 Yishmael (Rabbi), 75-76
 Yishmael b. Avraham Yitshak ha-Cohen,
 Rabbi, 88
 Yisrael, Rabbi (of Jerusalem), 184
 Yitshak Alfasi, Rabbi, 172
 Yitshak Arama, Rabbi, 141
 Yitshak Yosef ha-Cohen, Rabbi, 78
 Yosef b. David of Leipnik
 Jews receiving the Torah at Mt Sinai
 (drawing), 257
 Yosef Behor Shor, 31
 Yosef ben Avraham Hayyun, 75, 107-8,
 109, 142
 Yosef ben David, Rabbi, 65, 87
 Yosef ben Natan Ofitsial, Rabbi, 179
 Yosef ben Shalom Ashkenazi, Rabbi, 126,
 130
 Yosef ben Yehudah ben Ya'akov Akhnin,
 26, 27
 Yosef ben Yitzhak Sambari, 82, 118
 Yosef ibn Kaspi, 31, 64
 Yosef ibn Lev, Rabbi, 63
 Yosef Karo, Rabbi, 76, 77, 109, 128
 Yosef Yisashar ben Elhanan Baer, 118
 Zacharia ben Sa'adia ben Jacob al Zahari,
 205, 209
 Zavala, Silvio, 157
 Zecharia ben Shlomo ha Rofe, 30, 34
 Zurara, Gomes Eanes da, 146-47, 148,
 409n65
 Zvi Hirsch ben Avraham Eliezer Lipman,
 273